

India Now

October, 1983

**Monthly News Publication of Indian People's
Association in North America (IPANA)**

This PDF is prepared by Sukhwant Hundal in memory of his father
Shivdev S. Hundal and mother Harbans Kaur Hundal.

Source: Sukhwant Hundal's personal collections



INDIA NOW

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Monthly News Publication of Indian People's Association in North America

Russians Shoot Down Passenger Aircraft World Opinion Isolates Moscow

R.N.Raju

Moscow's action in shooting down the South Korean passenger aircraft and its attempts at justification have roused worldwide condemnation and outrage. 269 innocent people of various nationalities were killed when the Soviet air defense aircraft shot down the Korean airliner which had intruded over Soviet territory.

The Soviet Union refused to accept any responsibility for its inhuman act and kept the news about the shooting of the passenger plane inaccessible to its own population. However, the world outcry forced the Soviet Union to come up with a public report of its action accompanied by arguments of justification. The Soviet Union continues to insist that the plane, a Boeing 747 civilian aircraft, was involved with spying operations. But it has failed to explain how even in such a case it could justify the murder of the 269 innocent passengers.

South Korea has demanded that the Soviet Union publicly apologize, compensate for the losses and punish the Soviet personnel responsible for the shooting. The UN Security Council heard denunciation of the Soviet actions by many members. A Security Council resolution holding the Soviet Union responsible was vetoed by the USSR.

The international organization of commercial airline pilots called for a ban on flights to Moscow for 60 days. The United States has withdrawn permission for the operation of the Soviet airliner Aeroflot to USA and has asked all Aeroflot personnel to leave the country. The states of New York and New Jersey have decided not to permit the entry of any Soviet flight into airports under their control. As a result the Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko who was scheduled to attend the UN General Assembly session has chosen not to participate this year,

though the US State Department offered the use of a military airport in New Jersey.

Various governments worldwide have deplored the destruction of the unarmed civil aircraft and the killing of the passengers. "These are flagrant violations of the norms and practices of international civil aviation and international law," said the Canadian Deputy Prime Minister. The Australian Prime Minister said that "the Australian government is absolutely appalled at the barbaric act that has been perpetrated" by the Soviet Union. The Chinese government's permanent representative at the UN said, "we were shocked at and deplored the incident in which a Soviet fighter went so far as to have shot down a South Korean airliner, killing all the passengers and crew members on board, including quite a number of Chinese compatriots from China's Taiwan province and Hong Kong."

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"Grave Lapses" in Press Coverage of Kashmir Elections

Two principal factors were responsible for certain "grave lapses" noticed in the press coverage of the elections to the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, according to a report submitted to the Editors Guild of India by its president, Prem Bhatia.

Dealing with the three main incidents repeatedly quoted as examples of unfair reporting, Bhatia mentions (1) the fire in the attic of Cong(1) headquarters at Srinagar on May 19, (2) rowdyism, including arson, at Bijbehara in Anantnag district on May 29, and (3) rowdyism at Zadibal on the outskirts of Srinagar on June 13, 8 days after the actual polling.

He says, "It is clear to me the reports about all the three incidents were based on information either pieced together from limited personal knowledge plus

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Palkhivala's Letter Reveals US Suspicions of Soviet Plot to Topple Morarji

The Telegraph published a story recently according to which Nani A Palkhivala, then ambassador to the US, wrote in January 1979 to the then Prime Minister Morarji Desai informing him of a plot by the Russian government to destabilize the Janata government. The Telegraph also published Palkhivala's handwritten letter in which Palkhivala had been informed by a US State department source that according to the US intelligence services, "the government of the Soviet Union had decided that they

should work so far as it lay in their power to see that you cease to be the Prime Minister."

A State Department spokesperson as well as one from the Indian Embassy declined to comment on the issue.

The Desai government lost power in July 1979 because of various moves initiated by the so-called pro-Soviet lobby inside as well as outside the Janata party which resulted in splits in the Janata

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Chipko Leader Bahuguna Denounces Eucalyptus Forests

Sunderlal Bahuguna, one of the leaders of the Chipko (hug-the-trees) movement strongly condemned on August 10 the raising of eucalyptus plantations under social forestry schemes and accused the various state governments' forest departments of catering for the vested interests of the rich countries in doing so. Bahuguna was speaking in Madras at a program organized by Progressive and People-Oriented Science Technology, Madras.

forestry schemes is not social forestry at all. It is an unsocial act against Mother Earth. A forest is a society of living trees. But these eucalyptus plantations are timber-mines created to fulfil the greed for paper of affluent countries. The soil becomes acidic by planting eucalyptus trees and further loses the capacity to regenerate. Besides all the ground-water is depleted," he asserts.

The frail-looking, bearded Bahuguna, who shot into fame with his Chipko

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The racial violence which recently erupted in Sri Lanka has been exploited by the political parties in Tamil Nadu to gain short-term political advantages. Almost all the parties were seeking to achieve prominence as the ablest defenders of the affected Tamils in Sri Lanka. The contention for the dominant position in this category between the ruling AIADMK and the opposition DMK has been remarkable for what it reveals about the two organizations themselves.

AIADMK has chosen to follow the Gandhi government in relation to the Sri Lanka Tamils' problems. Naturally DMK led by M.Karunanidhi has been adopting a hardline approach and is presenting DMK as the supreme defender of the Sri Lanka Tamils. The competition between the two parties has reached ridiculous proportions as is illustrated by their meetings with the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) leader, Amirthalingam. Since the TULF

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Better Coverage of Women on TV Asked

The telecasting of feature films should be reduced to once a fortnight. This is important because the commercial cinema is the prime medium through which negative and derogatory images of women in our society are created and enforced.

The committee on the portrayal of women in the media has made this major recommendation to the working group on software policy for Doordarshan.

The committee held a seminar in New Delhi recently on the role of Doordarshan in women's equality and development, it came to the conclusion that television was subsidizing glorification of men's violence against women. As a participant put it: "Compilers of Chitrahar specialize in selecting the most lewd, most obscene, most esthetically hideous scenes."

The recommendations emphasize that

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"Growing eucalyptus under social

CIVIL LIBERTIES

Police Murder of Small Town Editor in U.P.

SAUMITRA BANERJEE

The first blow came from the back. As the lathi hit Suresh Gupta on his shoulder, he staggered forward, hit his head on the wooden ledge of a pan shop in front of him and fell to the ground. With pain tearing through his body, Suresh Gupta turned his head and saw three men, all carrying lathis, standing around him. One of the men then bent down, caught Gupta by his arm, pulled him up and started abusing him. "Bastard, so you will write against the police, will you?" he shouted.

At around 1 PM on July 9, the station officer of Baberu police station, Arun Kumar Shukla, rounded up two persons from the main market at Baberu and took them into police custody. One of them was Daya Kurmi, the brother of a notorious dacoit of the area, Gaya Kurmi; the other was Bansa Arrakh, a shopkeeper in Baberu who had been taken into police custody earlier because of petty crimes. Residents of Baberu, however, believe that Bansa had given up his life of crime



Shukla: absconding

to Bansa and my brother wrote about it."

On July 11, Suresh Gupta's report was published in Prades Path and this enraged the police, especially SO Shukla and CO C.P.Dwivedi. Shortly after seeing the report, Shukla went over to a grocery run by the Guptas in Baberu and called Suresh Gupta out of the shop. In the presence of Suresh's father and brother, Shukla told him that he would have to pay for this: he would have his arms and legs broken for having dared to have written against him.

This was not the first time that Shukla had threatened Suresh Gupta and had him beaten up. According to Lalchand, about a year back Suresh had written against a certain Kamlesh Shukla, the branch manager of Banda District Cooperative Bank, Baberu, who was a friend of Arun Kumar Shukla. The report had said that Kamlesh Shukla had indulged in certain irregularities in advancing loans. Kamlesh Shukla had complained about this report to Arun Shukla who, in turn, had Suresh beaten up by some local toughs. But Suresh had managed to escape this encounter with only a few minor injuries.

On July 12 C.P.Dwivedi arrived in Baberu from Banda and called some local journalists to the police station for a "meeting." According to Agnihotri, a local journalist who was present at the meeting, Dwivedi called attention to the report in Prades Path and warned that such reports should not appear in the press again. The consequences would be severe. As for Suresh Gupta, he said, appropriate action would be taken.

Next morning Suresh Gupta left his home (a 15-minute walk from the post office) at about 11:10 and walked towards the post office. He stopped at the pan shop to have a pan before going to the post office. Even before the pan had been served to him, he was attacked by three men with lathis. "While they beat Sureshbhai and he cried out helplessly, not a single person in the crowded marketplace stepped forward to rescue

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Junior Doctors Struggle in Bengal

Our Calcutta Correspondent

During the last few months West Bengal - Calcutta in particular - has repeatedly seen junior doctors in the streets. Their sustained agitation has not only drawn much public attention but also brought basic issues regarding public health to the fore.

Some 800 doctors graduate annually from the medical colleges of West Bengal. After that they are required to undergo practical training of one year's internship and another year's house-staffship. These interns and house-staff are termed junior doctors earning monthly stipends of Rs 400-550. Practically speaking, they, along with the nurses, are the people who run the day-to-day clinical business in all government hospitals. Theoretically, they are to be on duty round the clock. There is no provision of any leave. And worst of all, they have no guarantee of a job after they complete house-staffship. Presently there are some 3000 unemployed doctors in West Bengal.

There is another aspect. Take the five big government hospitals in Calcutta proper. Over a thousand patients throng to the out-patient departments of each of these hospitals daily. They cannot be given more than 1-2 minutes each. Worse still, the government sanctions only 50



"We will break every bone in your body." Saying this he swung his lathi around and hit him on the arm. Gupta cried out in pain. As he did so, the other two men followed the first man and started showering blows on him - on his arms, legs and head. This carried on for the next few minutes. Then, not satisfied with what they had done, two of the assailants caught hold of Gupta's arms and started twisting them. The pain was unbearable and Gupta started to lose his consciousness. Even as he fainted, he heard one of the men saying, "You deserve this for writing against the police." Suresh Gupta, the 32-year-old editor of a local paper, Madhyayug, and the correspondent of two dailies, Dainik Bhaskar and Prades Path, regained his consciousness briefly at the Banda District Hospital before he died later that day. He had to pay with his life for having written about a fake encounter in which the police had killed an innocent person. The date: 13 July; the time: 11:30; the place: Baberu.

Bihar Police Torture and Murder Suspect in Public

Paresh Dhar

(Calcutta)

Local tribals organized a demonstration at Gua, a small mining town in Bihar, on June 30th, demanding jobs at the iron ore mines of the Indian Iron and Steel Company. It is reported that the demonstrators assaulted three officials and manhandled the wife of one of them. On the basis of a case of rioting and murderous assault on the officials having been instituted, the police arrested five demonstrators - Bidar Nag, Kishore Pandey, Joakhim Bhangra, Jeetu Lehar and Shyam Tanti. They were brutally tortured in the police lock-up, the principal operator of the mayhem being Deepak Verma, the Deputy Superintendent of police at Gua.

The macabre drama touched a horrifying climax the next day. At about 4 PM, all the five prisoners were taken out on the road. Their wrists were strongly tied to the back of a police jeep. Deepak Verma was at the wheel of the jeep in the rear of which sat some policemen. The prisoners were ordered to run with the moving vehicle. When the jeep started, the poor fellows ran frantically to keep pace with it. As the jeep picked up speed, they naturally fell down and were dragged over an uneven stretch of half a

kilometer. The people on the road shuddered to see the ghastly sight.

The jeep stopped in front of the market place. It was Bidar Nag who was the first to be forced to lie on the sizzling road, his hands and legs bound. Two policemen pushed a bamboo rod between his two legs. His body below the waist-line was raised while the torso was on the road. Deepak Verma flogged Bidar Nag's feet with a bamboo rod. Another police man came forward to follow suit ... then another ... then another. Bidar Nag hollered and hollered in pain. A stunned 1000-strong crowd witnessed the flogging in broad daylight. Shanti, Bidar Nag's wife, cried aloud and begged the police to spare her husband but her wails fell on deaf ears. She swooned and fell down. The other four accused met with the same fate. When the victims were taken back to the Gua police station, Bidar Nag was fully unconscious. He died by 8 PM

The Bihar Government, led by Indira Congress, had no intention of making the incident known to the public. But recently when an Opposition member in the Bihar Legislative Assembly referred to the matter, it drew immediate public attention.

Police Firing in Orissa

Police shot dead one person and wounded 7 in breaking up two demonstrations in early August during a strike in Orissa. The strike was called by the opposition parties to protest the plight of victims of drought and floods.

paise of free drugs per patient. This amount cannot buy even a single antibiotic capsule. When the condition of a patient worsens and he/she dies, the wrath of the relatives comes down on these junior doctors who happen to be the people who come in constant touch with the patients and their relatives.

Amidst such a state of affairs and mounting unemployment among doctors in the last five years, the All Bengal Junior Doctors' Federation (ABJDF) came into being in January, 1982. It prepared a charter of demands divided into basic and action demands. Prominent among the eight basic demands are: 1) to formulate a scientific and people-oriented health policy to realize health as a fundamental right; 2) to establish one primary and three subsidiary health centers in each block to ensure one doctor for every thousand; 3) higher central and state budgetary allotment for health care; 4) to formulate a scientific drug policy to ensure the production of life-saving and other essential drugs under state supervision and at fair price. Its fifteen action demands include: 1) to regularize the supply of life-saving and other essential drugs to all the hospitals (urban hospitals and rural health centers alike); 2) to ensure x-rays, ECG, pathology and biochemistry facilities round the clock; 3) to ensure jobs for all willing JDs after they complete house-staffship; 4) forty-eight working hours a week, leave and other facilities for JDs; 5) monthly stipends of Rs 600 and 1,000 for interns and house-staff respectively; 6) representation of JDs in policy-making bodies; 7) full trade

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ECONOMY

Diamond Trade Fraud

ASHWINI SARIN

The enforcement directorate is looking into the activities of half a dozen prominent diamond traders of the country, who control the lion's share of the Rs 10 billion diamond export business through their network of 100 firms spread all over the world.

According to sources, these traders with their close family links have been manipulating the diamond trade in the country for over a decade now. It is believed that the country has been suffering from an annual loss of Rs 10 billion because of their underinvoicing.

India has over the last few years emerged as the world's largest diamond-cutting center specializing in small diamonds. The availability of cheap labor has helped the coterie of diamond traders, who have been able to set up thousands of diamond-cutting centers in rural Gujarat by advancing paltry sums to the workers. Almost 400,000 workers are engaged in the business.

Industry sources say that these powerful Gujarati families have thwarted all attempts of India to become a trading center for diamonds because such a center will affect their overseas hawala and rokada (black money) transactions.

(from the Indian Express)

Prices Shooting Up, Govt. Admits

Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee conceded in the Lok Sabha that general prices had risen during April to July this year by 6.5%, which amounted to a yearly inflation rate of approximately 20%. He also admitted that there had been a rather sharp increase in the prices of certain items like rice, pulses, edible oils, fruits, vegetables, and tea. According to Mukherjee, the government was planning corrective actions.

Air India Reports Profits

The Air India finished its 50th year of operations with a profit of \$38 million for 1982-83, the highest ever recorded by the airline since its inception in 1932. The profit almost quadrupled from the previous year profit of \$10 million; Air India had suffered a loss of \$20 million in 1980-81. Air India is one of the few international airlines making profits during this period of worldwide recession when most are in the red.

World Food

According to the Union Agriculture Minister, Rao Birendra Singh, the World Food Program was expected to supply India with commodities worth \$33 million during 1983-84. The World Food Program was likely to supply 73,000 tons of wheat, over 3000 tons of pulses and about 24,000 tons of soya-fortified wheat.

Wheat Imports

India has signed an agreement with American food-grain suppliers for the purchase of over 1 million tons of wheat costing over \$150 million. This is the first purchase of wheat this year in the US; last year the Indian government had imported over 4 million tons of wheat. In addition, India signed a contract with the Canada Wheat Board for importing half a million tons of wheat from Canada.

Russians Shoot Down Passenger Aircraft

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The Indian government has taken a somewhat equivocal stand on this Soviet action. At the beginning it refused to believe the news of the shooting down. Later a government statement expressed shock over the incident while "deeply deplored the loss of so many lives." "We do not understand," the statement said, "how the plane was so long off course, nor how it could not have been identified as a civilian aircraft."

4 New Wage Agreement Gives Little to Tea Workers

Sharit Bhownik

ON July 18, under a three-year wage agreement, the tea garden workers of West Bengal have been granted what press reports have called a 'wage increase'. By the new agreement, the state's 250,000 tea garden workers (213,000 of whom are permanent) will get increments of 75 paise every year; child workers (aged between 14-16 years) will get three annual increments of 38 paise. At present the daily wages are Rs 9 in Dooars (Jalpaiguri district), Rs 8.94 in Terai, and Rs 8.62 in Darjeeling Hills (both in Darjeeling district). Thus the now promised annual increment hardly carries the wage level to any civilized mark, if one were to consider the cost of living. Moreover, the tripartite agreement was signed one year after the earlier agreement expired. The enhanced wages will thus be given from April 1983, and not from July 1982 when the earlier agreement expired — the workers thereby losing nine months of their enhanced pay. It is surprising that the trade union leaders and the West Bengal government got the tea garden workers to accept this pitance.

Each successive wage agreement since 1977 has actually resulted in a smaller wage increase. The wage increase the workers got in 1977 was the largest they have ever got. The workers received that increase at the initiative of the Left Front government. They got one rupee as the annual increase for two years. Then in 1979, under a new agreement, the workers were given annual increments of 90 paise for the following

100 Women Arrested in Dowry Protest



Over 100 women including some MPs were arrested in New Delhi while protesting the government's failure to end harassment of young brides for a dowry by their in-laws. The protesters were demanding a special session of Parliament to pass a stricter law to curb dowry-related crimes. An anti-dowry law which was passed in 1961 has proven ineffective in the midst of reports of bride burning from all parts of urban India. Earlier Union Home Minister Prakash Chand Sethi had conceded in the Lok Sabha that the number of dowry deaths has risen this year compared with last year.

Obscenity Protested in Delhi

Several women belonging to many organizations in New Delhi demonstrated outside a cinema hall on Sept 3 and forced its management to cancel the screening of an obscene Malayalam film. The protesters described the movie "Crazy Lady" as being soft-core pornography. They carried placards and shouted slogans against pornographic films especially those debasing women. A leaflet distributed by the protesters singled out the Patriot newspaper as the worst offender regarding display given to the lustful advertisements of the movie. Later, Aruna Asaf Ali, the chairperson of the Patriot, was reported to have told the Telegraph that there was nothing more offensive in these ads than in the matrimonial columns carried by other newspapers.

three years. Under the new agreement that increment is reduced to 75 paise.

As if all this were not bad enough, the agreement has a clause at the end, whereby gardens that are 'financially weak' may be exempt from the application of the new agreement.

The clause has already had its expected effect. Soon after the agreement was announced, the managements of nearly all tea gardens in Darjeeling Hills and a sizeable number in Dooars and Terai announced that they would not be able to implement the agreement because of financial constraints.

The past record of the major trade unions in this industry does not show them to be very enthusiastic in defending workers' interests. Especially so during the last few years. For instance, the major unions chose to ignore the expiry of the previous wage agreement for a few months. It was only in late January this year that all trade unions — including CITU and INTUC — gave a joint call for a day's token strike in protest, which they proudly claimed to be a total success. There is usually no production in the tea gardens after November. During this period workers engage in winter cultivation which they complete by mid-January. After this, minor activities — such as digging of drains and repair of old houses — are taken up. Tea gardens have only half-day work, and many gardens grant their workers their annual leave in this time. Calling a token strike at the end of January, therefore, virtually amounts to workers donating a day's wage to their employers.

from EPW

Indian Women Demonstrators Mistreated by British Police

Many Asian organizations in England have protested the insulting police treatment of an Indian woman and her companions, and demanded an inquiry by the government into the case. Nita Dutta and 3 other women were protesting against the British government's decision to deport a 19-year-old Bangladeshi woman Afia Begum and her 2-year-old daughter. Afia Begum was allowed to immigrate into England to join her husband who had been living there for 12 years. Shortly after her arrival, her husband was killed in a fire and subsequently, the British Home Ministry declared Afia Begum's entry illegal.

Nita Dutta and 3 other protesters had chained themselves to the fence of British Home Secretary Leon Brittan's residence. According to Dutta, after their arrests, all women were strip searched. Then, two police officers removed Nita Dutta's sari and ordered her to sit on a bench in front of about half a dozen police officers. Dutta added, "I was wearing only a slip and the officers made jokes about me."

Jenny Fletcher, vice-chairman of the Greater London Council Women's Committee, has complained to the commissioner of the metropolitan police.

"Grave Lapses" in Press Coverage of Kashmir Elections

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hearsay or on partisan briefing by the political parties. None of the correspondents that I spoke to was able to claim a total eyewitness account as the basis for his reports."

"Two important factors were involved in what one can only describe as manufactured reports. One was a measure of personal bias against the ruling party, the National Conference. Several correspondents were ready to believe the worst about the share of this organization in the three incidents mentioned above."

The other factor was the vastly superior public relations work of Cong(I). The party team from Delhi, headed by Shafi

Qureshi and K.C.Pant, regularly fed local correspondents on information favorable to Cong(I).

Referring in some detail to the public relations activities of the two parties, Bhatia says, "I have been left with no doubt that the Cong(I) influence on correspondents — before, during and after the elections — included favors in kind."

Bhatia adds: "The arson incident at Bijbehara deserves special attention. According to one of the agencies, 80 houses were destroyed by fire by the National Conference rowdies. In fact, however, only one house was burnt and even that house did not suffer total damage. A couple of jeeps belonging to Cong(I) were destroyed, and there was some brickbattering. But the disparity between one house burnt and 80 houses burnt reflects a degree of professional cussedness which is beyond my comprehension."

"As Ramesh Thapar and Arun Shourie possibly noticed during their visits in June, newspaper readers in the valley ridiculed the reporting of the election incidents by correspondents of newspapers published from outside the state. Often, what was true only of a small part of the territory was projected (sometimes by the news desk) as applying to the whole state. This is especially true of the Zadibal incident on June 13."

Palkhivala's Letter Reveals US Suspicions of Soviet Plot to Topple Morarji

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party. Madhu Limaye and HN Bahuguna were the prominent figures in these moves with Charan Singh following up and laying claims to the prime ministership. Charan Singh eventually became the prime minister with the support of Indira Gandhi and her party and was later forced to call general elections ahead of time in which Indira Congress emerged victorious with all splinter groups from Janata party losing miserably.

Commenting on the letter, BJP leader LK Advani said, "What till now was a rumor or at best political speculation that Moscow also had a hand in the ouster of the Janata government acquires a new dimension with the publication of Palkhivala's letter." Advani added, "It is really for the persons directly concerned to throw fuller light on the episode. That would help make a better evaluation about repeated allegations that foreign powers had been meddling in India's internal affairs."

Desai had visited Russia shortly before he lost power. Desai had earlier revealed that during his trip, he was pressured and hinted that Russia would be happy if the Indian government went to war with Pakistan.

Better Coverage of Women on TV Asked

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there is often a direct link between the violence and sex shown in cinema and the increasing incidence of violence against women in the country. Yet such films consume over 20% of total viewing time. They also have a particularly negative effect on young children and adolescents.

The committee also recommends that programs take cognizance of women as workers in the fields, mines, plantations and factories as well as in white-collar professions and as significant contributors to family survival and to the national economy.

A committee member gave the example of the program Krishi Darshan: she pointed out that though women form 26% of the agricultural workforce, by and large Krishi Darshan remains oblivious to the presence of women in agriculture. The rare appearance of women in this program is usually either as folk dancers or as health advisers to pregnant mothers.



ADAB NEWS

OPINION

Superpowers Intensify Battle for Supremacy

R.N.Raju

The battle for global supremacy is being intensified by the Soviet Union and the United States. Various world events are pointers to this trend. The increasing commitment of the USA to maintain its visible presence in Lebanon, the active American intervention in Central America, the increased involvement of the superpowers in the Middle East, the continuing crisis in Southern Africa, the unending and fruitless series of arms negotiations and especially the talks on Euromissiles, the continuing Soviet presence in Afghanistan, the Soviet support to the continuing Vietnamese presence in Kampuchea are all indicators of the intensified contention between the two superpowers for domination. Both countries unhesitatingly have been adopting aggressive postures and testing the willingness of the other to impose any deterrent.

The Middle East is continuing to remain a major battle ground. The Palestinian people are in a very difficult situation following the evacuation of the PLO from Lebanon. Israel is bent on rejecting the PLO and spurning the offers of political solution to the key problem of the Middle East. Israel has maintained a significant armed presence in Lebanon, contravening the assurances given earlier regarding troop withdrawal. Under international pressure and because of growing domestic opposition, Israel seeks to withdraw a part of its occupation forces from Lebanon. The vacuum so created is sought to be filled by the United States. While the Soviet Union is adding military assistance to Syria and is seeking to capitalize on the internal differences among the Palestinian people, the United States is slowly reinforcing its commitment to a military presence in Lebanon. The Lebanese government continues to be plagued by the domestic differences which are being inflamed further by active foreign interference, especially on the part of the two superpowers and Israel.

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Naxalite Activity in Bastar

SEVANTI NINAN

The pink cover of the botany text looks harmless enough: it claims to be an introductory course in plant pathology by Dr R.L.Tripathi. Open the book, and the first page screams "People's War" in bold red.

Such textbooks are now sprouting in the forests of southwest Bastar. Once believed to be no more than a hideout for Andhra Naxalites, this region of MP is now producing frequent evidence of an active, growing movement.

Development of Bastar has taken place largely in the north. The south has remained inaccessible and neglected. Much of the southwest is still not connected with motorable roads, which makes government personnel even more reluctant to be posted there. Now fear of Naxalite activity has resulted in more people demanding transfers. Both the current Commissioner and Collector of Jagdalpur are the third to occupy their respective posts in a space of twelve months.

Robin Hood tales of Naxalite doings are spreading beyond the two tehsils believed to be now affected. Held to ransom for decades by lower level forest department personnel, traders and contractors, tribals here now find that their new self-appointed champions are delivering the goods.

"Tribals believe in instant justice and that is what the Naxalites are giving them," says a senior police official. "If a man has extorted money from a tribal, they slap him and make him return it. A school teacher on the Bijapur border recounts the tale of a shopkeeper who was found hoarding sugar and was duly beaten up after the Naxalites had verified this. Earlier this year the director of Indravati national park and an executive engineer

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Caste System for Privileged Workers?

A CORRESPONDENT

permanent workers of big industry. In a world of mounting unemployment along with the habits of thought conditioned by age-old social relations of the caste system, it is very easy for permanent workers to seek solace in patriarchal relations.

The steel agreement has a Rs 125 minimum benefit for the workers and has brought the minimum wage in the steel industry upto Rs 781. For the large substratum of contract workers the agreement has nothing other than an oft-repeated clause to eliminate contract labor in jobs of a permanent nature. Some increases for the permanent workers along with almost nothing for the contract workers has become a feature of wage policy in the public sector. This discrimination in wage policy has now been reinforced by virtually reserving permanent jobs for the children of the permanent workers.

With the "employee's son" principle having been accepted in the steel industry, there is bound to be a strong move for its implementation in all of the public sector. There is no question of even CITU opposing this move. IFTU has stood against this move (though some of its units have at times been temporarily

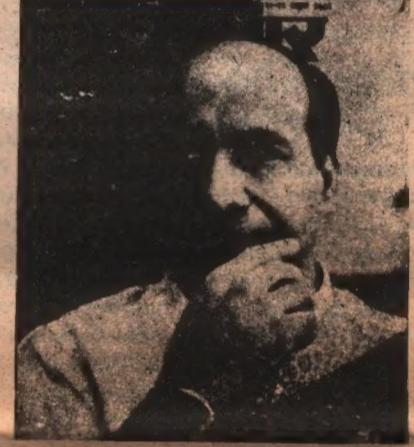
swept away by the obvious support among permanent workers for this demand). In Dhanbad A.K.Roy has opposed this demand; he has carried his opposition to labeling the permanent workers too as part of the "exploiting nation" in his two nations of internal colonialism.

Opposition to this principle has also come from within the government itself. The Union Finance Minister is reported to have opposed it as also many Chief Ministers. Chief Ministers of states where public sector projects are located apprehend that it would lead to local persons being denied jobs. The Law Ministry has pointed out that the principle is unconstitutional, as the Constitution only allows for upto 50 per cent reservation.

The "employee's son" question will provide a stern test for the trade union movement. Appeasement of the selfish interests will only reinforce reactionary caste ideologies. Which of the trade unions will take up the challenge of standing for class principles? Failure to do this will only divide the working class, set permanent workers against the rest and consolidate a section of the workers as a political reserve of the ruling class.

From EPW

Yagya Dutt Sharma on Ravivar's 10 October 1982 issue cover



Press Wins Battle with M.P. Speaker

virtue of being the Speaker of the Assembly.

Appearing thrice before the privilege committee, Surendra Pratap Singh, the editor of Ravivar, opined that the Speaker could not claim to be sacrosanct because of the office he was holding and the press was within its rights to criticize him if he had done anything wrong. He also argued that the privilege committee had no right to judge the conduct of the editors who he thought were absolutely within their rights and had only discharged their obligations as they were expected to.

The privilege committee nevertheless
(continued on page 5)



Editor Singh: the pen prevailed

Farooq Abdullah Confronts Hindu Communalists in Pune

Udayan Sharma

Sheikh Abdullah ek mahan secular tha. Kya mujey bhi yah sabit karnay kay liye ki main Hindustani hoon, apni mayyat ka intezar karna padega."

On the evening of August 9, the Palit Pawan Sanghatana had warned that they would not allow the convention leaders - Sharad Pawar, Kalraj Mishra, H. N. Bahuguna, Satyadev Singh, Chandra Shekar and Dr. Farooq Abdullah - to speak. There was a huge crowd at the meeting grounds - nearly two or three lakhs, according to knowledgeable estimates - and when Dr. Abdullah rose to speak, the PPS volunteers started causing a pandemonium.

A section of the crowd hurled chappals and stones at the dais. Someone even threw a few snakes at Dr. Abdullah. For about ten minutes there was complete chaos till Dr. Abdullah came on the mike. Said he: "I am an Indian. I was an Indian. I would like to ask all those who have leveled charges against me that I

Cutting Forests to Package Fruit

H. K. Varma

The major 'consumer' of wood in the Himalayas is the apple industry which requires over 28 million wooden boxes for packing the entire crop. In the past few years great strides have been made in the production of apples, going up to 917,000 tons in 1981-82.

Apple production is poised for growth which in turn will increase the demand for wooden boxes still further. This prospect is causing so much concern that the leader of the "Chipko" movement, Magaysay award winner Sunderlal Bahuguna, is calling for a curb on the production of apples because otherwise far too many trees have to be felled to pack them.

The Sivaraman Committee (National Committee on the Development of Backward Areas, appointed by the Planning Commission) estimated that the equivalent of 10 hectares of timber is needed to pack the fruit from one hectare of orchards. Are we replenishing our forest resources at this rate?

Alternatives do exist in the shape of tray-packed corrugated cartons. Not only is the introduction of the alternative of packing being delayed but the existing method of packing is actually being encouraged by providing wood for packing cases at a substantially low price.

am not an Indian, if they have any proof that they are more nationalist than me..." The crowds hearing his words chased the demonstrators away. Dr. Abdullah then seconded the allegation put forward by Sharad Pawar that Cong(I) had financed and stage-managed the pandemonium to disrupt the meeting. Point by point, Abdullah demolished all the allegations raised against him by the Hindu communalists and the Congress I. At the end of it all, there were shouts of "Shivaji Maharaj ki jai" and "Dr. Farooq Abdullah zindabad."

From Sunday

INDIA NOW OCTOBER 1983

The Malaysian Indian Poor: A Neglected Majority

[The author visited Malaysia recently.]

Kuala Lumpur: Details surrounding the discovery this summer of some 40 Malaysian Indian contract laborers living as virtual prisoners of a government subcontractor in a palm oil estate south of Kuala Lumpur, have graphically highlighted the precarious economic position of the Indian working class in Malaysia.

Nearly a year ago, 23-year-old Saraswathiammal, a worker suffering from TB, managed to leave the Selanchar estate for treatment at a hospital near Kuala Lumpur. Illiterate and frightened, it was Saraswathiammal's desperate attempts to regain custody of her small child without having to return to the estate that took her story all the way from social workers, the social welfare department, the police, a private women's refugee center, independent sympathizers, and finally to the public. In bits and pieces, she reconstructed a grim picture of the life she had escaped, and revealed stories of workers being beaten, children forced to drink samsu (a locally brewed liquor), adults made to eat animal feces, and wages withheld for up to three years.

Backed by independent corroboration, the Institute for Social Analysis, an outspoken educational research organization, disclosed these conditions at a press conference in July, setting off a national debate on the whole question of plantation labor which has yet to yield any satisfactory answers.

HISTORICAL ROOTS

While a young mother's attempts to be reunited with her small child gave rise to the unearthing of this glaring case of labor exploitation, many see Selanchar as yet another example of the effects of an overall oppressive structure dominating Malaysia's estates.

Such a structure finds its roots in the legacy left behind by British colonial capital which had engineered large scale migration of cheap Indian labor during the early part of this century to prop up the plantation economy. Most of the laborers were recruited from the lowest castes of South Indian society, victims of historical emasculation at home and thereby especially susceptible to exploitation abroad.

Forced to do grueling work at pitifully low wages, and live in cramped and unhygienic barrack type houses under strict discipline, it is what many writers have called a sub-culture of poverty - characterized by low self-esteem, lack of initiative, and other negative cultural values. Plantations still lack proper schools, fair wages, and adequate housing. Housing on estates today is often a remnant from British days. Plantation schools have been found to be totally wanting in qualified teachers and materials.

More than 40% of Indians are still tied to the estates where an average rubber tapper made about \$93 a month in 1981.

A. Ambika

Overall, some 82% of the Indian population are manual laborers with an average monthly income between \$65 and \$215. Indian unemployment remains the highest in the country when compared to the Chinese and Malays, who make up the other two major ethnic groups.

The sort of institutions that have emerged over the years as guardians of Indian interests leave little room for optimism in the poor. The most important of these is the Malayan Indian Congress (MIC) created in 1946 and patterned after the Indian National Congress. The MIC is widely seen as a party reflecting middle class interests even as gestures to maintain working class support are made from time to time. It was only after the Selanchar expose made national headlines that the MIC leadership announced the creation of a labor bureau within the Party after 37 years of ostensibly representing its huge worker constituency.

At a meeting called shortly after the Selanchar incident, top MIC leaders suggested that the system of contract labor itself might not be bad, but rather, the problem was its abuse.

UNIONS' RISE AND FALL

During the late 1940s, Indian workers enjoyed a brief period of strong trade union activity as Malaysia was gripped by a growing anti-colonial sentiment. Following World War II, overseas demand for rubber had shot up with concomitant profits for British planters. Frustrated at being shut out of any share in this new wealth, a restive anti-colonial labor took root and exploded violently.

Whatever gains were made at this time were by and large lost as British authorities clamped down a state of emergency in 1948 to combat the rising tide of militant anti-colonialism. Emergency rule and its oppressive paraphernalia was to last another 12 years. During this period worker activism suffered major setbacks.

Emergency rule succeeded in snuffing out several important trade unions backed by the Malayan Communist Party through de-registration and less official tactics. The repression carried out under arbitrary powers against insurgents and left-wing groups eroded the growing power of Indian labor organizers on plantations who were labeled "communists" and altered the course of future trade unionism and political activism.

The colonial government at the same time vigorously sought to foster so-called "responsible" trade unions which would be far more manageable and much less disruptive. It was from these efforts that the National Union of Plantation Workers (NUPW) emerged in 1954. Held back by the constraints under which it was created, the NUPW in many people's opinion, never fully overcame its original weaknesses. Essentially following a line of accommodation, the Union has proved to be less than effective in significantly improving the conditions of plantation labor.

Canadian Police Inquiry into KKK

According to a report, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police is conducting an investigation into the Ku Klux Klan in the British Columbia area. It is suspected that the racist organization has moved its headquarters from Toronto to Vancouver. According to the president of the British Columbia Organization to Fight Racism (BCOFR), Charan Gill, the probe into the KKK activities might not have been necessary had Premier Bill Bennett's government in BC not disbanded the Human Rights Commission. The Commission was disbanded in early August by the provincial government as part of economic measures to reduce civil service expenditure. These cuts along with others have affected the minority communities and the lowest strata of the population the most.

Indian Doctors in England Face Deportation

back door."

Britain has over 22,000 foreign doctors with an estimated 10,000 from India.

Earlier the British Medical Association demanded that strict regulations be devised to control both the number of foreign doctors and the length of time for which they can practice. The demand for tough regulations was being made on the plea that British-trained doctors are unable to find work while large numbers of overseas doctors are filling hospital posts. Some British doctors have called the demands of British Medical Association racist. Commenting on BMA's demands, Korlipara said what they are saying is "Yes, you are useful. Come and serve us for some four years. Then go back."

Press Wins Battle with M.P. Speaker

(continued from page 4) in its wisdom found the editors of Blitz, Ravivar and Dinaman guilty of publishing "objectionable matter" against Sharma, "which brought into disrepute the honor and reputation of the House and thus committing a breach of privilege and contempt of the House." The committee therefore demanded that the editors should publish prominently in their respective publications the report of the privilege committee and place on record the committee's "displeasure" at the editors exceeding the rights conferred on them by the Constitution and ignoring their responsibilities.

Although Blitz carried a summary of the censure against the editors by the privilege committee, S.P.Singh and Kanhaiyalal Nandan, the two other editors held guilty of breach of privilege, did not. During the next three months, Sharma tried to compel the editors to reconsider their decision, but without any success. By that time the Congress(!) high command too was convinced that Sharma could not be defended any more without risking the political future of the party in the state and so he had to quit.

A "Fundraiser" for Mondale

Recently, a few of my friends attended a fund-raising dinner for former Vice-President Walter Mondale, a candidate for Presidency in the next election. The function was organized by a group called A.A.I.P.A., which stands for Asian Indians In Political Action. The cost of the dinner was \$100 out of which \$60 was supposed to go to the Committee For Mondale.

The function was attended by only 65 persons of whom 25 were guests. The President of the group, one S.P.Singh, who welcomed Mondale, spoke such bad English that people hung their heads in shame. Even a new arrival of Chinese or Spanish origin in this country speaks better English than Singh. I think he could have spoke in an Indian language with an English interpreter. There is nothing wrong in speaking in one's own language if English is an alien language to you. I am told Mondale did not understand a single sentence this man was speaking.

Mondale was promised at least twelve (continued on page 12)

Another point to note is the lack of participation of women from the South Asian community. Our sisters go to the factories to work and make a living; they work at home. They also deserve to relax. Further, if they can go to the factories, work on the farms, why can they also not go to the playground to watch and participate in tournaments? Our brothers do not hesitate to take their sisters and wives to Indian movies. What is the harm in our sisters coming to the playgrounds? We hope that our brothers and sisters would pay due attention to this matter and encourage the womenfolk to participate in such events.

Finally, the organizers and participants in the tournament must be praised for their efforts in putting together such a successful tournament with limited time and budget. The spectators must also be credited for their enthusiasm, encouragement and help.

Indira Gandhi in the U.S.

Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi is scheduled to arrive in New York on Sept 26 to participate in the annual session of the United Nations General Assembly. The same day US President Ronald Reagan is scheduled to address the General Assembly on the shooting of the South Korean jet by the Soviet Union in which 269 people were killed; the Russian government has charged that the plane was on a spy mission. Although no meeting between Gandhi and Reagan has been announced yet, there are strong speculations among diplomatic sources that Gandhi and Reagan will hold informal talks.

In a related development, the North American Akali Dal and the Sikh Council of North America are planning to hold two separate protests against Gandhi because of her government policies in handling the Punjab crisis. The Sikh Council of North America had feted Gandhi during her official visit to the US last August when she had visited the Richmond Hills gurudwara in Queens, New York. The leaders of the Gurudwara had been criticized by the communities and leaders of other Sikh organizations for allowing Gandhi to use a place of worship for political speeches and refusing to allow other worshippers because Gandhi supporters thought that those worshippers were opposed to her. Explaining the change in its stand, a statement by the Sikh council asserted that "nearly 400 innocent Sikhs have been brutally killed during peaceful protests and the alleged encounters by the police." The statement added that the protest was an "desperate attempt to draw the Prime Minister's attention to the dangerously serious situation in Punjab." The protests are scheduled for Sept 28 when Gandhi is to address the General Assembly.

VISION, an organization that is concerned with the problems of dalits in India, is doing an educational program in Washington, D.C., on September 26. The aim is to publicize human rights violations in India. The film, An Indian Story, is to be screened as part of the program.

Junior Doctors Struggle in Bengal

(continued from page 2)
union rights for doctors.

The ABJDF resolved, at their second conference held on March 23, 1983, to go for an all-out movement in a phased manner. On April 4, the superintendent of N.R.S. Medical College and Hospital in Calcutta closed down the hospital allegedly due to strike by the junior doctors. But he deliberately withheld the reason behind the JD agitation. Actually, the drug manufacturers had stopped supplies to the hospital since around Rs 8.6 millions were due to them. The Left Front government sided with the superintendent and blamed the JDs for the closure. At last, the government worked out a face-saving formula by allotting Rs 1 million extra to the NRS hospital for purchase of drugs.



Before the fallout of this incident could settle down, the superintendent of Burdwan Medical College and Hospital terminated the services of two house-staff - Tapas Bhowmik and Naren Mukherjee - for allegedly assaulting him. One of them is handicapped according to some junior doctors. The nurses of BMCH were on hunger-strike in protest against the superintendent's alleged immoral behavior towards one of them. As some out-

Jagannath Replaced by C.S. Singh

Dr Jagannath resigned from the post of Bihar's Chief Minister on August 14. Jagannath reportedly sent a telegram to Indira Gandhi, the President of Indira Congress, on August 10 seeking her permission to resign and placing his service at her disposal. Talking to reporters, he insisted that he had offered to quit on his own and not at anyone's insistence.

A group of dissidents in Indira Congress had been campaigning for quite sometime to oust Jagannath on charges of corruption, highhandedness and nepotism. They were earlier led by Kedar Pandey until his death. Recently, there had been news reports of over 100 Congress(I) legislators signing a petition demanding his ouster.

Jagannath became Bihar's chief minister for the second time in 1980. During his tenure, he came under severe attack because of his government's complicity and attempt to suppress facts and inquiry of the Bhagalpur police blinding under-trials and prisoners, passing of the Bihar Press Bill and corruption in the drought relief programs.

He is also involved in a case of corruption and forgery in the Patna Cooperative Bank, which the Supreme Court has recently decided to look at again.

Many newspapers had predicted over the last 3-4 weeks that Jagannath would be forced to quit. According to the Telegraph, he would be made to resign because Gandhi was convinced that he could not lead her party to victory in the next general election. Further, he had clashed with the High Command on various issues. Rajiv Gandhi, one of the five general secretaries of Indira Congress and who is in charge of the Bihar unit, had recently appointed Jagannath's foe Shyam Sunder Singh Dhiraj to head Bihar's Youth Congress. Dhiraj was earlier dropped from the cabinet by Jagannath to

Indian Doctors from the West to Meet in India

SEKHAR RAMAKRISHNAN

The Second US-India International Congress of Medicine is going to be held in New Delhi on December 19-21 of this year, with a simultaneous satellite session in Bombay. It is being sponsored by the department of medicine, continuing medical education, the Chicago Medical School. According to a press release from the program coordinator, physicians from the US, Europe and India will present papers in all disciplines of medical sciences, e.g., surgery, cardiology, pathology, internal medicine, psychiatry, neurology, dentistry, pharmacology, radiology, pediatrics, anesthesiology, ophthalmology, infectious diseases, and endocrinology. The proceedings of the convention will be published. Persons who would like to attend or present papers are urged to call Dr S.Sandhu at 914-634-9058 or Dr S.Singh at 312-578-3335.

By covering every specialty in medicine, including dentistry and psychiatry, the organizers are serving the needs of

siders, under the direct supervision of the superintendent, were peeling off posters pasted by the agitating nurses, Dr. Bhowmik and Dr. Mukherjee stood in their way. An altercation between the superintendent and the junior doctors followed. This infuriated the super, said to be a close acquaintance of one of the state health ministers. And hence the dismissal.

Demanding unconditional reinstatement of Bhowmik and Mukherjee and transfer of BMCH superintendent, junior doctors all over the state went on a total boycott in all the government hospitals, except emergency wards, from June 13. Ultimately, Chief Minister Jyoti Basu sat with ABJDF representatives on June 17 (he could not find time to do so for two years) and promised to reinstate Bhowmik and Mukherjee. He also said that a committee would enquire into the BMCH incident and that he would sit again with ABJDF in the first week of July to discuss their other demands.

The two-person enquiry committee set up by the state government found Bhowmik and Mukherjee to be innocent. But strangely enough, the government not only tried to hush up the committee's findings but also did nothing to reprimand

snub the dissidents. Jagannath responded by installing Upendra Singh Vidyarthi to head a parallel youth congress which was not liked at all by the High Command. Jagannath also made a speech in the assembly on July 26 in which he allegedly launched an attack on the Central government for neglecting Bihar and asked the opposition to support him in his assertions. His later apologies did not apparently convince the party bosses in New Delhi.

Chandra Shekhar Singh, until now Minister of State for Energy in the central cabinet, is to head the new Congress(I) government. He was sworn in as the chief minister of Bihar along with 9 others as ministers. In an interview with the Telegraph, Jagannath said that he still commanded a huge majority but decided to step down in deference to the wishes of the party leader Indira Gandhi. In his first press conference in New Delhi, the new chief minister CS Singh said that he "was totally dedicated to Indira Gandhi." In reference to Jagannath's followers, Singh also added that "he was not one of those who were keen to go to Bihar but had accepted the assignment in the spirit of my leader's confidence in me." Singh commented that Gandhi's confidence in him arose because he had been with her during all the crucial moments including the two splits in the party. Commenting on Jagannath's government, Singh said that the previous government had completely misused the state's meager resources in schemes that were both unproductive and expensive.

A report in the Telegraph said that the Brahmin lobby led by Congress(I) working president Kamlapatri Tripathi was putting pressure on the party high command to induct Jagannath into the central cabinet. A Patna daily recently carried a full page ad by a Jagannath follower praising his rule in Bihar.

Tamil Nadu Minister Suspends Top Neurologist

SEKHAR RAMAKRISHNAN

In an incident that became an embarrassment to M.G.Ramachandran, the Tamil Nadu government suspended Dr T.S.Kanaka, a top neurosurgeon and chief of a neurological unit in the Government General Hospital in Madras, for not waiting on a minister. The subsequent uproar in the medical community is making the government run scared, looking for a way to squirm out of the mess.

One Saturday afternoon, August 27 to be precise, Transport Minister S.Muthuswami went to the head injury ward in the neurology block to see a man injured in a bus accident. He showed up with a large crowd of hangers-on and started making a racket, demanding that doctors and nurses report to him. The nurse on duty, Selvi, refused to oblige. (For this, Selvi was suspended for a week following an "investigation.")

Next the minister demanded to see the doctor. Nearby was Dr Kanaka at her desk, but she did not get up. When an official told her that a minister was in the ward in connection with a patient, she suggested that the doctor in charge be called to talk to the minister.

The infuriated minister went straight to the chief minister's office, which ordered Health Minister H.V.Hande to do something. Hande, the dean of the medical college, the director of medical education and the RMO conducted an "inquiry" the same day and decided to suspend Dr Kanaka.

Dr Kanaka apparently expected some such action. Even before she was suspended, she gave the dean her resignation letter. The dean was taken aback. Since he knew the suspension had no basis and was only being done to placate a powerful politician, which he had no problem doing, he expected Dr Kanaka to accept the suspension and go through the inquiry.

Within two days, the medical students and junior doctors were on the warpath. A strike was threatened by the students unless the suspension order was immediately and unconditionally withdrawn. Hospital officials were forced to go to the chief minister and plead.

The attitude of senior doctors was not very good. Initial reports in the press cited some of them offering excuses for Dr Kanaka, that she suffers from a slipped disk and cannot get up easily or that the patient belonged to another unit. As if she should have waited on the minister if she were in perfect health or if it were one of her patients. And the officials, including the dean and the director of medical education, who were pleading with the government to withdraw the suspension order, had not stood up to the politicians when the suspension was originally demanded. The dean and DME are both doctors themselves but appear to have no respect for the integrity of the medical profession.

Press coverage of the affair was also interesting. The Tamil dailies generally have party affiliation; the opposition papers gave a lot of space to the news and follow-up stories while the ADMK papers did not. The two English papers, supposedly independent, were a study in contrast. The Indian Express covered the suspension on its front page and provided some follow-up. The Hindu ignored the topic completely. It was as if nothing had happened. This was surprising since the matter was of concern to the middle class and professionals, who are the major readers of the Hindu. When this writer asked a friend why the Hindu ignored such a subject, the response was to ask me to compare the number of advertisements given by the government to the two papers.

By September 3, when this writer left Madras, it appeared that the government was looking for some face-saving way out of the mess. Since the suspension order had clearly come from MGR's office, he was going to look foolish if it was withdrawn and the government's error admitted. At the same time, Dr Kanaka (continued on page 7)

Bar Council Criticizes Transfer of Judges

R.N.Raju

The Bar Council of India has criticized the Central Government's policy of transfer and posting of High Court Chief Justices outside their original states. The move was "calculated to destroy a fearless and independent judiciary, to ease out brave and impartial judges and generally undermine the influence and prestige of the judiciary," the Council said. The Center recently transferred judges from the High Courts of Kerala, Jammu and Kashmir, Gujarat and is contemplating the transfer of some more Chief Justices. In 1981, the chief justices of Bihar and Madras were transferred against their will. The anticipated transfers are to affect the Chief Justices of the High Courts of Punjab, Haryana and Allahabad. Future changes are to cover the High Courts in Rajasthan, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras.

The Bar Council said that "an unmistakable impression is being created" among the people and practising lawyers that the "Government wishes to humiliate and denigrate certain judges whom it does not find completely pliant and congenial." The delay in confirming Justice Sarwar Ali, Justice Subramanian Potti of the Kerala High Court (who has been transferred to Gujarat) and Justice Chandorkar of the Maharashtra High Court "carries its own message," the resolution of the Bar Council said. "The manner in which the confirmation of Justice P.D. Desai as the Chief Justice of the Gujarat High Court is being handled is unfortunate and deplorable," the resolution said. No attempt has been made to explain the Government's actions and dispel the sense of disquiet felt by the members of the Bar and the public in general, it said.

In addition to the Bar Council of India, a number of state lawyers' organizations have condemned the government's actions. Lawyers of the Gujarat High Court and all subsidiary courts abstained from work for two days in protest against the appointment of an "outsider" as the Chief Justice of the court in "utter disregard of the rightful and just claims of the acting Chief Justice, P.D. Desai. A meeting of the Gujarat High Court Bar Association passed a resolution condemning what it called the undemocratic, unconstitutional and politically motivated action of the Central government. The resolution said that Desai was a "very able, independent and seniormost judge of this High Court... Such attempts to undermine the independence and integrity of the judiciary and punish and humiliate the bold and independent judges, smack of ushering in an era of committed judiciary." The Kerala unit of the All India Lawyers Union also protested against the transfer of Justice Potti from Kerala to Gujarat.

The transfer of judges follows the recently adopted policy of the Center to have the Chief Justices and one-third of the judges of High Courts from outside the state concerned. According to the guidelines presumably followed by the Center a Chief Justice who has only one year or less to retire may not be transferred to another High Court. Also a puisne judge who has one year or less to serve when his turn for being considered for elevation as Chief Justice arrives may be considered for promotion in his own High Court in case a vacancy exists at that stage.

Commenting on the transfer issue, former Supreme Court Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer said that the transfer should be based on well-defined principles publicly announced. He suggested that the appointment and the transfer of judges to the High Courts and the Supreme Court should be left not to individuals including the Chief Justice or the President. A large body should be created and the states which have a vital stake in this issue should have a voice in the decision making, he said. He suggested that this subject should be one of the issues for a national debate on the Center-State relations.

While it is possible to argue for the concept of transfer of judges from a pub-

Tamil Nadu Match Factories Have Highest Concentration of Child Labor in the World

Match factories in Tamil Nadu have the highest concentration of child labor in the world, according to a report by the International Committee of Jurists (ICJ).

A study carried out for the working group on slavery of the United Nations human rights sub-committee revealed that 45,000 of the 100,000 employees of match factories in Ramanathapuram district were under 15.

The ICJ asked the human rights sub-committee to investigate the problem on the spot and to advise the Indian Government to take steps to improve the situation.

Lorries and buses bring children in from villages upto 30 km. Children have to leave home between 3 and 5 AM only to be returned between 5 and 9 PM.

A poll carried out in 16 of the fac-

tories showed that three-quarters of the children working there were illiterate.

They are employed on a piece-work basis. Those aged four to ten earn around two rupees a day and older children earn six or seven rupees. They also run long-term health risks by being forced to handle chemicals such as potassium chloride, phosphorus, and zinc oxide.

The report was compiled by an Indian official Harbans Singh, who was appointed to the task by the Central Government in 1976. He stressed the importance of increasing wages, stopping the piece-work system, and cutting working hours for children.

The report added that a ban on the current working practices would not necessarily stop them, and the government has not yet put Singh's recommendations into effect.



Children in Custody

According to a report in the Hindustan Times, over 2000 children are languishing in jails despite a recent Supreme Court judgment. West Bengal leads with more than 600 children below 16; Bihar has 428 jailed children, MP 239 and Punjab 183. According to the report, West

Bengal and Jammu and Kashmir authorities have pronounced part of the jails as "home for children" in order to give a semblance of conforming to the requirement of providing remand homes for children.

Tamil Nadu Minister Suspends Top Neurologist

(continued from page 6)

by resigning first had shown the public what she thought of the administration.

Dr Kanaka, who is 50, was the first Indian woman to be trained as a neurosurgeon and is highly regarded in her field. She worked for two years in the army and has been in the Tamil Nadu medical service for twenty years. She is known to be a very hardworking person, staying in the hospital late in the evening or night, as long as necessary to attend to all the patients. A friend of this writer suffered a head injury in June and had been in the same unit for a few days. He found Dr Kanaka to be a rare soul who actually cared for her patients. Her attitude to her work no doubt played a major part both in her response to the transport minister as well as in the medical students' reaction to the suspension.

lic interest point of view, the concrete experience of the Indira government has been one of using the transfer issue as a weapon to threaten and penalize judges. Unless the Government demonstrates its actions in terms of public interest, the transfer issue would continue to be viewed from the point of view of penalties and rewards.

Tamil Nadu Parties Seek Political Gain from Lanka Tamils'

(continued from page 1)

Leader had met Prime Minister Gandhi and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran before meeting Karunanidhi, the latter went to Tiruchi so as to attract public attention to the special trip undertaken by Amirthalingam to Tiruchi. To deny DMK leader from gaining any excessive publicity, MGR also went to Tiruchi so that Amirthalingam had to meet both of them. Also MGR arranged to pick up Amirthalingam from the airport itself so that he would have the priority in meeting with him compared to Karunanidhi.

TULF leader Amirthalingam had agreed for a luncheon with Karunanidhi as a way to pacify DMK's discontent. However, Chief Minister MGR forced Amirthalingam to have lunch with him, much to his embarrassment and discomfort. Eventually, the TULF leader had to accommodate a second luncheon to appease DMK leader. These banal events merely go to show the extent to which the Tamil Nadu political parties would go for gaining short-term political gains at the cost of the real interests of the Sri Lanka Tamils.

Janata Captures Most Municipality Seats in Karnataka

Janata party seems to have swept the municipality elections in Karnataka. Candidates sponsored by the Janata party have won 80% of the seats in 170 municipalities. According to Karnataka Chief Minister Ramakrishna Hegde of Janata party, Janata also captured 90% of the Agriculture marketing committees in the state. He attributed the victory to popular approval of the seven-month Janata rule under his ministry.

Earlier, the Janata party won a majority in Bangalore city corporation and it emerged as the largest party in Mysore corporation.

Assam Strike Protests Rajiv

The All Assam Students Union and the All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad, two organizations which have been at the forefront of the nearly four-year-old agitation held a 36-hour strike to protest Congress(I), MP and general secretary Rajiv Gandhi's visit to the state. The two groups were also protesting what they described as "the imposition of an illegal government in the state undemocratically by the center instead of solving the foreigner issue first, as demanded by the people of Assam for a long time." Before the strike, police arrested over 100 activists belonging to the two organizations.

Shops and offices in several parts of Assam were closed in response to the strike. Earlier the state government banned strikes in essential services in Assam. The strike was the first action since AASU and AAGSP suspended their agitation following election related violence which took the lives of over 3000.

Poor Response to India's Call for UN Summit

Very few leaders of various countries have responded to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's proposal for an informal international conference during the UN General Assembly session in late Sept which according to UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar had a three-item agenda: International security, international economic situation and the reinforcement of the United Nations. According to the External Affairs ministry, 15 leaders and heads of government had accepted the invitation, including the leaders of Greece, Spain, Sweden, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Zambia, Egypt, Yugoslavia, Finland, Cape Verde, Pakistan, Vanuatu and Mauritius. It seems that Soviet President Andropov and US president Reagan would definitely not attend; British Prime Minister Thatcher is also not likely to attend. French President Mitterrand has reportedly not decided yet. Leaders of Italy, West Germany, China, Canada and Japan have not indicated one way or the other.

The proposal for such an informal meeting came during the 7th non-aligned summit at Delhi.

It was not only AIADMK and DMK which were out to make their political fortunes. The Congress faction led by Nedumaran organized a much publicized spectacle of a march to Sri Lanka to directly defend the Tamil minority. The march which started from Madurai stopped at the Southern border of Tamil Nadu because of the absence of boats needed for their illegal transportation into Sri Lanka.

In their busy schedules aimed at the domestic Tamil population, the interests and concerns of the Sri Lanka Tamils went practically ignored. That the problem affects more severely Tamils of Sri Lankan origin more than the Tamils of the Indian origin was not recognized.

The people of Sri Lanka need to resolve internally the racial conflict which has been permitted to develop to the ugly proportions as seen recently. The only meaningful contribution from the Tamil Nadu political parties could be non-interference and restraint on their part from causing unnecessary inflammation.

Supreme Court to Rehear Jagannath Case Appeal

The case of Dr Jagannath's involvement in the Patna Urban Cooperative Bank swindle will be heard again by the Supreme Court.

A three-judge division bench on August 22 directed that the case be heard all over again immediately after the decision in a similar case involving the former chief minister of Orissa, Nandini Satpathy.

The order was passed on a review petition filed by Sheo Nandan Paswan, a Janata legislator, against the former Bihar Chief Minister.

This case, which has been haunting Dr Jagannath since the mid-seventies, will have to wait for some more time since the Satpathy case is yet to go before a five-judge constitution bench.

Dr Jagannath was accused in 1978 of forgery, cheating and corrupt practices in shielding his friends in the bank swindle. But when he came to power in 1981, he managed to drop cases against him and his friends. This was challenged in the Patna High Court by Paswan. The High Court held the withdrawal of criminal cases valid.

Paswan appealed to the Supreme Court, which upheld the High Court decision. Justice V.D.Tulzapurkar ordered a retrial but Justices Baharul Islam and R.B.Misra by a majority upheld the High Court decision.

Soon after the decision, Justice Islam resigned from to be a Cong(!) candidate in the Assam elections. Paswan sought a review of the decision since (1) the judgment of Justice Islam was vitiated by a reasonable possibility of bias and as such the judgment was no judgment in the eye of law; and (2) the majority decision suffered from serious legal defects that were apparent on the face of the record of the case.

This review petition was heard by Justices Tulzapurkar and Misra along with A.N.Sen replacing Islam. The new bench unanimously admitted the review petition.

This is the first time that the Supreme Court has rejected its own judgment by allowing a review petition in what is considered an important case involving a high public official.

Naxalite Activity in Bastar

(continued from page 4)
of the rural engineering service were stopped on the road while traveling in a jeep and lectured to by an action squad which demanded that encroached forest land be regularized and drinking water wells be dug for villagers."

During the tendu leaf collection season in June, Naxalites forced contractors to pay Rs 15 as minimum wages.

The Naxalites operating around Bijapur, Bhopalapatnam and Konta have been identified as belonging to the People's War Movement of Kondapalli Sitaramiah, who is now in prison. They aim to force the administration to respond to the needs of the local population.

The group operates through small dalams or action squads, which usually number five but in a major operation can swell to 15. Recently at a camp near Talaguda, a hundred new recruits were trained. Though they began by confining themselves to the Telugu-speaking border belt, the dalams have been slowly moving further afield.

(from the Indian Express)

Superpowers Intensify Battle for Supremacy

(continued from page 4)

The situation in Central America is somewhat at a standstill. While the US military presence and intervention have grown, they have not been able to achieve any decisive gains in the region. However, they are maintaining a state of instability thus making the region a fertile ground for future confrontations. Similarly no progress has been achieved on the

Eucalyptus: Why?

Mahasveta Devi

In the 1961 district gazetteers of Palamau and Singhbhum, in the chapters on forest, there is not a single reference to eucalyptus. Nor in a handbook prepared and published by the government of West Bengal does one come across the name now deified by the Union and state governments. Destruction of natural forests and plantation of eucalyptus is quite a recent affair.

Forest consists of trees, plants, creepers, shrubs, bushes and undergrowth of grass and lesser plants. Enough has been written about Sal forests but almost all the Indian trees have social and economic relevance to the immediate society. In the Bouddha Jatakas we come across a story. Jeevaka, Gautama Buddha's physician, was once sent to a forest by his teacher to collect plants which have no use for mankind. Jeevaka came back after a long time and said that he had failed to find such a plant.

A mixed forest sustains the immediate society. Not all of them are tribals. In the forest ares, tribals and non-tribals all the poor people somehow make a living from the forest.

Today, with heavy finance from Sweden, Singhbhum is felling natural forest and planting eucalyptus. WIMCO needs eucalyptus for the matchbox industry. I was shocked to see Palamau robbed of the magnificent bamboos, palas, kusum-sidha, shisham and sal, and newly clothed in eucalyptus. A tribal woman in mod clothes would not look more incongruous. But it is still possible to come across real forest in Palamau and Singhbhum here and there. In the Bankura, Purulia and Midnapur districts of West Bengal it is all eucalyptus. Our villagers have been robbed of food, fuel and means of survival because of state social forestry. One cannot eat the leaf, bark or fruit of eucalyptus. Eucalyptus does not offer shelter from sun and rain. But protest against eucalyptus in West Bengal is interpreted as "influence of Jharkhandi propaganda."

Why this sudden forest-departmental frenzy for eucalyptus? Well, eucalyptus is matchboxes, rayon, furniture, medicine. Which class benefits from factories, workshops, plants and markets connected with various eucalyptus products? Definitely not the poor and the downtrodden. Forest is meant for the society sustained by the forest.

As a fullgrown eucalyptus consumes eighty gallons of water a day, it is not good for dry soil but beneficial for marshy land. The chief of Terai forests, Nainital division, had admitted in 1975 that wherever eucalyptus plantation had come up,

question of Namibia and Southern Africa remains a crucial region for superpower conflict.

Both the United States and the Soviet Union have been engaged in arms talks over the past many years and recently some of these talks have focused on Euromissiles. Since November 1981, a total of over 86 sessions of talks have been held in Geneva aimed at limiting medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe. Both President Reagan and the Soviet leader Andropov have presented counterproposals. Each country is presenting their individual proposals more to appease their domestic audience and to counteract the growing global concern against nuclear weapons. Both the USSR and the USA are looking at these talks as a way to establish their military superiority.

The continuing military presence of Soviet Union in Afghanistan has turned out to be a financial as well as a political burden for the Soviet Union. At the same time it is unable to extricate itself from a situation it itself created without causing damage to its perceived strength. A similar situation prevails with respect to the Vietnamese presence in Kampuchea.

To briefly summarize, both USSR and USA are intensifying their global presence in their attempt at seeking domination. At the same time, both are finding that the results do not come quickly. In the process both are burdened by the economic cost associated with their massive armament programs and by their military presence worldwide. The struggle for domination between the two super-

the tubewells went dry and water-level of the wells fell. He had also noted that the forest-floor in an eucalyptus plantation was devoid of undergrowth. According to Marjorie Sykes, eucalyptus trees were to be uprooted if the river or stream nearby went by.

During the summer, the hot wind blowing from the plains do not get resistance from the eucalyptus and hit the snowlines. Previously, the hot winds used to absorb the moisture of the Terai. As a result, the Pindury glacier is already on the recede. Nainital and Mussorie are not so cold any more. In 1982 a specialist on the subject of world renown had come to Dehradun Forest Research Institute and expressed his dismay at seeing eucalyptus plantation between Dehradun and Rishikesh. He said that it was senseless to fell fruit and fuel yielding trees and plant eucalyptus. Eucalyptus would suck the soil dry. If any tree in India needed uprooting, it is eucalyptus.

Water consumption of one eucalyptus is equal to that of ten Sal trees. Its slim trunk and narrow leaves are incapable of resisting wind. Nor can it offer shade. So the upper level of the soil, which conserves water and nitrogen salt, gets eroded due to direct exposure to sun and wind. The sandy sub-level gets exposed. During the monsoons this sand gets carried down to the river beds. Thus the rivers and streams of the dry areas are getting filled with sand and denudation of vegetation on the banks is causing widening of the river-bed. Such rivers get easily flooded causing havoc to the countryside.

An impartial and objective survey by a team of experts will prove that (a) eucalyptus plantation is a threat to India's store of subsoil water-reserve which is already diminishing; (b) it is a threat to the country's ecological, natural and atmospheric balance; (c) eucalyptus plantations on the Himalayan foothills should be cut down and uprooted to protect the snowlines from the hot winds blowing from the plains; (d) rivers, streams, wells, tanks and tubewells in the eucalyptus area are drying up, and (e) it is monstrous to plant eucalyptus in the drought-prone regions of West Bengal, Bihar and elsewhere in India.

An anti-eucalyptus movement on a national scale seems to be the only answer. Since eucalyptus-oriented forest-policy and the abominable forest bill are closely linked together, such a movement should thwart and ultimately defeat both.

From the EPW

powers is bound to remain strong since the failure to gain quick success only accentuates the desire for success.

Police Murder of Small Town Editor in U.P.

(continued from page 2)
him. They were all petrified," said Nathu, the pan-shop owner. "No one was willing to help him because they were scared of their own lives, especially since they knew that the goondas were acting on instructions from the police."

At about the time when Suresh Gupta was dying at Banda District Hospital, Ram Sajeevan, Munnu Maharaj and Mahesh – identified by residents of Baberu as the three assailants of Gupta – were casually strolling along the stretch of Baberu market, their task completed. They had spent some time at the police station where Arun Kumar Shukla was present and had decided to go to the market to have a meal. In fact they would have been roaming around freely in Baberu even today had it not been for the fact that a delegation of journalists went to SP Banerjee and demanded that the assailants, along with Arun Shukla, be arrested immediately.

On July 14, Ram Sajeevan and Munnu Maharaj were arrested. But Mahesh had managed to escape. Along with Mahesh had escaped SO Arun Kumar Shukla.

Zia Upset at Indira's Comments

(continued from page 1)
other countries. At the same time, India had always condemned inhuman treatment meted out to people irrespective of whether such acts took place in this country or elsewhere. She said when such things happened in India's neighborhood, "we are moved because these have repercussions in our country. Therefore, we just cannot keep our eyes closed."

In a protest note, Pakistan's Foreign Office told Indian Ambassador Krishna Sharma that these statements amounted to interference in Pakistan's internal affairs and the Indian government's attitude was bound to damage mutual understanding and confidence. Indian statements were also called hostile.

Pakistan's President General Zia-ul-Haq said in a press conference at Islamabad on Sept 5 that although he considers Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's recent statements on developments in Pakistan unfortunate, he feels this will not worsen relations between the two countries. Zia said, "We in Pakistan want to carry on with our normalization of relations with India."

Pakistan's Information and Broadcasting Minister Raja Zafarul Haq is reported to have said that "A big power which is currently holding the stewardship of the nonaligned movement is blatantly violating the principles for which the movement was founded."

NDA CRITICISM

Within India, Charan Singh and A.B.Vajpayee of the National Democratic Alliance criticized Indira Gandhi for her remarks. They said, "By her ill-considered remarks, not only has the Prime Minister offered provocation to the government of Pakistan but has also weakened the cause of those seeking democratic rights in that troubled land by creating the impression that they are being instigated and supported by a foreign power."

Also, "by her statement the Prime Minister is encouraging a dangerous new doctrine that would permit every nation to interfere in the affairs of another in the pursuit of its ideology." They said it was doubly unfortunate that the Prime Minister should have "spoken thus" when India is the head of the non-aligned movement.

Vajpayee and Charan Singh said it would look particularly odd at this juncture that while the government of India did not "hesitate to interfere in the internal affairs of a neighbor with which a treaty of friendship is being negotiated, it remained blissfully noncommittal or silent when the sovereignty of countries like Afghanistan, Nicaragua and Poland was under attack by foreign powers." They added "not only that in the case of Kampuchea, Mrs Gandhi has even condoned occupation."

In the circumstances, the people of India would be perfectly justified in concluding that the Prime Minister's statement on the situation in Pakistan amounts to an attempt to divert their attention from her failures on all fronts with an eye on the elections that are not far off."

Vajpayee and Charan Singh said, "While examining her exuberant faith in democracy, people in this country and abroad will certainly recall to their mind the Emergency that she so cynically imposed on her country in 1975 reducing its Constitution and democratic liberties on which it was built to ashes."

The police, however reluctantly, have admitted their guilt. The chief minister of UP, Sripat Mishra, has visited Baberu and met Suresh Gupta's family. A check for Rs 10,000 has been handed over to his wife and jobs have been promised to his children. CO Dwivedi has been transferred from Baberu – once again an admission of his role in the incident. The case has been handed over to the CID to investigate. But like most other cases, will this case also be forgotten once the hue and cry has died down and SO Shukla quietly reinstated?

(from Sunday)

New Durg Mayor a Millionaire Bootlegger

Suchcha Singh is the new mayor of Durg in Madhya Pradesh. The 35-year-old Singh is vaguely described as a multi-millionaire. He is in the liquor, transport and steel business. But Madhya Pradesh police believe not all of it is above board. He has been accused of involvement with the underworld and running bootleggers' dens.

He was in jail for three years as an accused in a sensational highway murder case in which an attempt was made on the life of the Nirankari chief near Durg. The Nirankari chief escaped but a woman in his car was killed by bullets. Suchcha Singh was later released by a court for lack of evidence.

On June 24 last, his younger brother Santokh Singh was killed in an encounter with the police in Hoshangabad district. The encounter took place when he and some accomplice were fleeing in a car after having allegedly shot dead three rival liquor contractors. Three of his accomplices were also killed.

Suchcha Singh and his brothers have been accused of using strong-arm tactics

Supreme Court Orders Compensation for Rights Violation

Two recent decisions by the Supreme Court have established the principle that people denied their fundamental rights by the government are entitled to compensation. Chief Justice Y.V.Chandrabud first ruled in the case of Rula Sah, a sane man kept in a mental asylum for 14 years, and ordered the Bihar government to pay him Rs 20,000.

Subsequently, on August 12, Justices PN Bhagwati and Sabhyasachi Mukherji ruled that if a person's fundamental rights to life and liberty (under Article 21 of the Constitution) are violated, he or she should be compensated. The decision was given in the case of Bhoma Charan Oraon vs Bihar; Oraon was kept in a mental asylum for 6 years although he had been declared sane. The court awarded him a compensation of Rs 15000.

Oraon, an undertrial prisoner, was sent to the Ranchi Mental Asylum in 1976 by the subdivisional magistrate. The hospital told the magistrate that Oraon was sane but nothing was done. Repeated reminders over the years led to no action until last year when the Ranchi free legal aid committee sent a letter to Justice Bhagwati as the chair of the legal aid implementation scheme of the central government. The letter was treated as a writ petition and proceedings began in the Supreme Court. Then Oraon was acquitted and released in Bihar.

While the sums of money awarded in the two cases are small, the decisions are thought to be of major significance since they open the way to a large number of claims from individuals who have been detained illegally or tortured by the government.

Longowal Rejects

Khalistan

The President of Akali Dal, Harchand Singh Longowal, reiterated that his party had nothing to do with Khalistan or its self-styled leader Jagjit Singh Chouhan. Longowal was being questioned by reporters about a letter of Chouhan to Balbir Singh Sandhu, the socalled secretary general of Khalistan who has allegedly been hiding inside the Golden Temple, asking Sandhu to hold election of a successor to Chouhan. Longowal added that Chouhan was expelled from the Akali Dal longtime ago by the late Fateh Singh for anti-Dal activities and that Chouhan was a creation of Indira Congress. Chouhan recently said in an interview with the Indian Express that he had met Indira Gandhi at least twice and discussed with her the concept of Khalistan to which she had raised no objection.

In another development, two confidants of the extremist leader Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, Amrik Singh and Thara Singh, were acquitted of charges connected with a shooting incident. New

to protect their "liquor empire."

Chief Minister Arjun Singh reportedly summoned him to Bhopal and asked him to resign. However, the liquor contractor and the 22 Congress(I) corporators faithful to him – all of them had been brought to Bhopal – refused to oblige.

Now the crowd has gone to Delhi to meet Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi to plead its case for the continuance of Singh as mayor.

One of his supporters, Vasudev Chandrakar, the Durg district Congress(I) committee president, said: "The chief minister told us that the high command wanted him to quit. I asked Arjun Singh to name the person in the high command. But he kept mum. So Suchcha Singh refused to resign."

Chandrakar hinted that all the 22 corporators faithful to Suchcha Singh would quit if he was forced to resign.

Suchcha Singh is reportedly pinning his hopes on the support of Candauli Chandrakar, Zail Singh and Buta Singh.

(from the Indian Express)

Bahuguna Denounces Eucalyptus Forests

(continued from page 1) movement and who recently completed a 4000 km marathon padayatra from Kashmir to Kanyakumari to educate the people on the value of forests, says it is high time a new strategy on forestry in which the human beings and trees can coexist.

"The real forestry is one which should take into consideration the basic needs of the people and their basic needs are the five Fs – food, fodder, fuel, fertilizer and fiber.

"The forestry philosophy should be that we should be able to fulfil our needs from our surroundings. That is real social forestry."

For this, Bahuguna advocates planting of food-giving trees like walnut, coconut, jackfruit, oil-seed, fodder-giving trees, fuel-giving trees, fertilizer-giving trees with broad leaves that easily decompose and fiber-giving trees like tree-cotton and mulberry.

Stressing that planting of eucalyptus trees will be an ecological disaster, he rues the fact that 80% of the trees being planted now are eucalyptus. A whole district in Gujarat – Bhavnagar district – has been turned into a vast eucalyptus plantation. Even farmers having rich and well-irrigated cropland have taken to planting eucalyptus in a big way.

"The rich nations are behind this exploitation of third-world countries," he says.

He quotes Robert Lamb, a leading environmental journalist and author of the book, *A World Without Trees*: "It is becoming steadily cheaper for industrialized countries to import their timber and wood-pulp requirements from tropical third-world countries than it is for them to maintain forestry interests of their own."

Quoting statistics from the findings of the International Union of Conservation of Nature, he says that in 1950 the demand from the US, Japan and Europe for tropical hardwood for industrial purposes was 4.2 million cubic meters per year. In 1980, the demand peaked at 66 million cubic meters.

Replying to a question on the success of the Chipko movement in UP, Bahuguna says a ban has been imposed in eight districts on the felling of trees for commercial purposes. The ban had proved effective. Chipko's another demand is that monoculture forests (forests consisting of only one species of trees) should be turned into mixed forests as had been done in affluent nations.

Reports speculated that the release of the two indicated that the center was ready to negotiate with Bhindranwale; according to some reports, secret negotiations between Bhindranwale and the government were already going on. Bhindranwale is considered to be very close to President Zail Singh and was brought to prominence to erode the base of moderate leaders of the Akali Dal.

Reddy and Desai

Morarji Desai has disclosed that former President Neelam Sanjiva Reddy had once wanted to become Prime Minister. According to Desai, Reddy was entirely responsible for the fall of the Janata government in 1979. This controversy came up following the publication of correspondence between Desai and Reddy during the period of Janata rule, which is appearing in a forthcoming book by Arun Gandhi entitled *Morarji's Papers*. Imprint carried an excerpt.

According to the article in Imprint, Reddy had criticized Desai for his performance as Prime Minister and had also questioned the business dealings of Desai's son Kantibhai. The Hindustan Times called one of Reddy's letters, which was written 6 months before the fall of Desai's government, a charge sheet against Desai and an unqualified and naked indictment. Reddy had also resented that Desai had not taken Reddy's advice in various matters. Reddy had also questioned Desai's and his son's dealings with the former Shah of Iran and his family. Reddy has denied having leaked the letters.

The article in Imprint also traces how Reddy might have made a deal with Indira Gandhi and helped topple the Janata government. Reddy's role during the crisis that emerged after splits in the Janata party was highly controversial and criticized by many leaders of the then Janata party.

According to a report in the Hindustan Times, Desai himself made these letters available to Gandhi; Desai called the correspondence personal instead of confidential. According to this report, Desai felt irked by the fact that the Imprint magazine carried excerpts of letters by Reddy to Desai which according to Desai were one-sided; they did not include Desai's responses.

Maharashtra Allows Private Engineering Colleges

Congress(I) Men Float Profit-Making Colleges with No Facilities

Olga Tellis

Bombay: The permission to private institutions to start engineering colleges from 24 July has evoked protests all through the state and even a court case. It has however not deterred politicians – mostly of the Congress(I) variety – from floating engineering colleges overnight in the same fashion as they do sugar factories. As a recent advertisement declared, the state's deputy chief minister, Ramrao Adik, is now floating the "Sri Ramrao Adik Institute of Technology," Vashi, New Bombay.

The new advertisement reads: "The Government of Maharashtra has granted permission to Shri Ramrao Adik Education Society to start the Ramrao Adik Institute of Technology at Vashi from the academic year 1982-94. The institute is due to be inaugurated at New Bombay in a newly acquired accommodation measuring 3200 sq.m. opposite Konkan Bhavan on 11 August. Spare facilities of the established engineering institutions of Bombay are expected to be available in the initial stages." The catch is in the last sentence, and this is what the protests are all about.

It appears that people are starting institutions without the requisite facilities for students. One reader for instance, expressing his astonishment at the advertisement, which invites applications for admission to engineering degree courses (60 seats each in computer sciences, instrumentation and electronics), using "spare" facilities of other institutions, says, "I happen to have just finished my B.E. (electrical) from the Sardar Patel College of Engineering, Andheri. This college has only two oscilloscopes in its electronic laboratory and none in its communications lab. This college does not have a computer. VJTI (the only other degree college in the city) has only one computer terminal. Both colleges have one microprocessor kit each. When these existing institutions lack the necessary facilities, I wonder what kind of spare facilities would be made available. The

Another Opposition Alliance

Four opposition parties – the Janata party, Sharad Congress, Democratic Socialist Party of HN Bahuguna and Gujarat-based Rashtriya Congress – announced on Sept 5 the formation of an alliance to challenge Indira Congress at the general elections scheduled for 1985. The alliance, known as the United Front, has 36 members in the Lok Sabha and 27 in Rajya Sabha. The leaders of the alliance expressed the hope that it would be the nucleus for a wider grouping to challenge Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

Earlier, BJP and Lok Dal leaders had announced the formation of the National Democratic Alliance. This alliance has 41 members in the Lok Sabha and 20 in the Rajya Sabha.

The United Front has appointed Janata Party chief Chandra Shekhar as the convenor of its 6-member coordination committee. Other members of the committee are Bahuguna, Sharad Pawar, Biju Patnaik of Janata, Ratubhai Adani of Rashtriya Congress and IK Gujral. According to a draft policy statement, socialism and secularism will be the main planks of the United Front and it would follow nonalignment internationally and left-of-center politics domestically.

According to Janata party leader Madhu Dandavate, the draft will be circulated among the main partners of the Left Front in West Bengal, the National Conference of Dr. Farooq Abdullah in Kashmir, the Telugu Desam of NT Rama Rao in Andhra, DMK in Tamil Nadu, and Peasants and Workers party in Maharashtra, and Jagjivan Congress. The Chief Minister of West Bengal Jyoti Basu of CPM welcomed the United Front saying that the CPM might join the alliance if it found the Front's program acceptable.

Maharashtra Allows Private Engineering Colleges

Olga Tellis

advertisement also says that the fees would be Rs 6,500 per annum. I did my course at around Rs 400 p.a. If this isn't capitation fee, what is it?"

Yet another to jump on to the lucrative engineering institutions' bandwagon is the union minister for communications, Vithal Rao Gadgil. He has floated the "New Engineering College, Pune" with himself as chairman and Vithal Rao Jadhav, MP, as vice chairman. They have only two lecturers at present and 180 seats. Since they have neither the requisite place nor the laboratory, they have announced that they will be holding classes in the Pune Law College and will be using the laboratory of the Pune Engineering College.

The question being asked is why does the government not help the present engineering colleges or other existing educational institutions to set up engineering institutions instead of permitting all and sundry to start without any requisite facilities. The chief minister has defended this step by saying that "Maharashtra should not only produce clerks, it must produce engineers."

One of the largest controversies surrounds the capitation fees that will demand for the 18% of the seats left to the discretion of the management.

So now the engineering colleges will be as lucrative as the sugar factories for politicians and the people's representatives who manage them. And like the sugarcane farmers who do not really benefit by the cooperatives, the "engineers" will benefit even less.

From Sunday



RURAL INDIA

Commission on Dalits Demanded

Opposition members in the Lok Sabha have alleged police involvement in atrocities on the so-called untouchables and tribals and have demanded the constitution of a commission to monitor implementation of the center's guidelines to the states on protection of the down-trodden sections of the society. The Union Minister of State for Home NR Laskar shared the concern expressed at the continuation of the atrocities which he described as a "national shame" but he did not agree to set up any commission.

Floods Kill Hundreds

According to the Minister of State for Agriculture, Arif Mohammad Khan, 740 people have died in floods, heavy rains and land slides this year in 12 states. Unofficial figures are over 1500. Casualties have been reported in Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Orissa, Kerala, Meghalaya, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh.

According to another Minister of State for Agriculture, Yogendra Makwana, over 1/2 million acres of crop and approximately 200,000 homes were destroyed in the disasters. In addition, nearly 95,000 heads of cattle were lost.

Nellie

Six Months Later

On the face of it, this large village with market open and eating shops doing good business appears normal. But it is not the same, everyone admits.

Bedhakar Deka, who has been to jail for six days in connection with the killings, said, "Both the sides are scared. If the CRP is removed nobody knows what will happen." Deka is out on bail.

The terrible happenings of February 18 are in the mind of everyone. It will take a long time for everyone to get over it.

Exactly six months ago, this correspondent was an eye-witness to the killings on the bank of Demal, a part of what is known as the Nellie massacre.

It was a planned attack. The mob consisted of hundreds of tribals traditionally armed with daos (hatchet), bow and arrows, jathi (sort of spear), posa (multi-point spear), sharpened bamboos, bagful of earthen shots to be used by catapults and a few guns.

The refugee camp at Nellie is still there despite the announcement in Parliament that all have been closed. The survivors of the black Friday are in four camps around the village.

Those in the Nellie camp are a dejected lot. "We have been forgotten now. In the initial days even the Prime Minister came to console us," said Akbar Ali. "It would have been better if we were put in jail. At least, we would have got food there."

"The magistrate tells us to forget about food," said Abdul Razak. "Even the promised amount of Rs 2,000 has not been given to us. Only Rs 1,500 has been given and the rest is yet to come."

"People have come to inquire about our condition but with no improvement. The rice meant for us is being given to the killers," complained Altafuddin bitterly.

But the victims are trying to settle on their own. A few shops have come up by the side of the highway. Abdul has put up a sewing machine in his hut under a tin shed provided by the government. A few catch fish and sell it in the market. They do not stay for long in the market.

In the camp there have been a few marriages. "It has been for the good of the young children who have lost either of their parents and also for those who have lost their companions," said Imamuddin, an old man in the camp.

(from the Indian Express)

CPM Accused of Killing Tribals in Bengal

Our Calcutta Correspondent

The popularity of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha and other like-minded political parties among the tribals of Chotanagpur region of Bihar and its adjacent areas of West Bengal is hardly questionable. Also well known is the fact that CPM has never seen eye to eye with the tribals of this region on their demand for a separate Jharkhand state.

On June 22, Tarapada Mukherjee of Rudara village, an activist of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, caught a Panchayat official of CPM red-handed at Kashipur market while he was allegedly selling rapeseed oil originally allotted to the gruel kitchens for drought relief. This caused a stir in the area.

Next day, Tarapada Mukherjee's house was raided by CPM activists in the presence of police and the local MP and MLA of CPM. Unable to catch Mukherjee, they damaged his house and left. In protest, JMM called a rally in Rudara village on July 13.

CPM called a parallel rally at Rudara village on the same day and amassed some six to seven hundred men, mostly poor landless, along with some committed CPM supporters, by paying them the wages earmarked for various rural construction schemes under the Panchayat.

Apprehending trouble, JMM leaders decided at the eleventh hour to call their rally off. But not all of their units could be informed. So, on July 23, as some 20 or so tribals from Jhalda-Balarampur area reached Rudara with JMM banners they were attacked. The puzzled Jharkhandis were chased by CPM supporters, all armed with lethal weapons, towards the woods near Beko river. What happened after that is anybody's guess. Although the exact number of dead could not be confirmed, sources put the figure around seven.

A spokesman for the Revolutionary Youth League, which took out a torchlight procession on July 23 at Kashipur and another in Adra in protest against this massacre, alleged that the local CPM MP Basudev Acharya, MLA Suren Majhi, and senior police officials of Kashipur like the Circle Inspector, the O.C. and S.I.S. were directly involved with the incident.

MIGS to be Made in India

Indian Defense Minister R. Venkata-raman confirmed in Lok Sabha that an agreement had been signed with the Soviet Union for licensed production of MIG-27 aircraft in India. He said that it was not in the public interest to disclose the details of the agreement at present. Just after his visit to Moscow, Venkata-raman had denied reports that any arms agreement had been signed during his visit to Russia.

Foreign Students in India Face Restrictions

According to a report by Kuldip Nayar, foreign students in India who have been involved in political activities related to their own countries and governments may soon find themselves in trouble. Strict action is being taken against them.

There are nearly 15,000 foreign students in India from 60 countries. Students most affected are likely to be from Iran, Palestine and Afghanistan.



INSAT-1B

The space shuttle Challenger successfully launched the multipurpose Indian satellite INSAT-1B as scheduled on August 31 morning. Launching of INSAT-1B was the reason why Challenger was launched during the night on August 30 so that INSAT-1B could be above the equator within the radar range of tracking stations in India; previous shuttle launches have been during the day. The Indian government paid \$12 million as the launching fee to the NASA.

Like its unsuccessful predecessor INSAT-1A, INSAT-1B's purpose is to combine 3 functions: telecommunication, television broadcasting and weather forecasting. It was built by Ford Aerospace according to the specifications provided by the Indian Space Research Organization. INSAT-1A was also built by Ford Aerospace and was launched in April last year by NASA on board a delta rocket, but it became inoperative in a few weeks. ISRO officials blamed the failure on the malfunctioning of the craft's solar sail which provides power to the satellite. The malfunctioning had resulted in the satellite using all its reserve of energy in a very short period. According to Indian scientists who are working on this project, INSAT-1B incorporated built-in safety procedures and that the problems that affected INSAT-1A had been corrected.

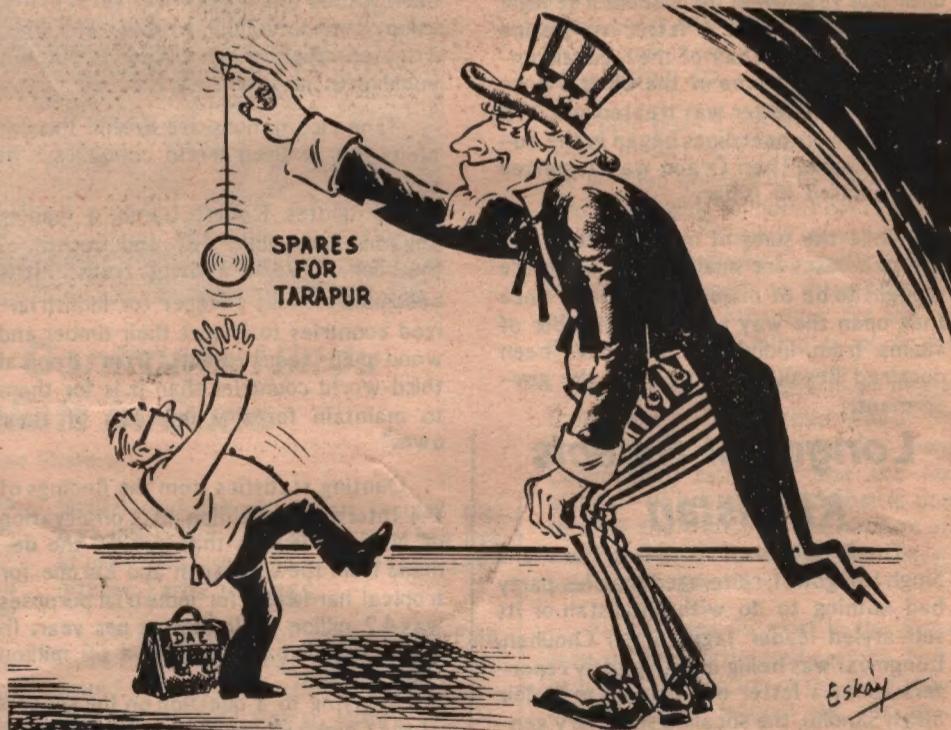
India Seeks to Join Antarctic Club

India has joined the consultative committee of the Antarctic treaty. Besides India, Brazil was also made a member during the committee's meeting on Sept 12 in Australia.

According to the US government, India had met the criterion of accumulating valuable data and setting up a permanent station where its research team had met the qualification of a substantial scientific research activity. India has already sent two successful expeditions. Other countries in the consultative committee include US, Soviet Union, Britain, Japan, France, Australia, Norway, Belgium, South Africa, New Zealand, Poland, West Germany, Argentina and Chile.

South Asian Cooperation

Foreign Ministers of 7 South Asian countries - India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Nepal -



Ramanna is Atom Chief

Dr. Raja Ramanna, the director of the Bhabha Atomic Research center, succeeded Homi N. Sethna as the chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission when Sethna retires on August 31. Dr. Ramanna had earlier been appointed the scientific advisor to the defense minister in 1978.

Dr. Ramanna is credited for his contribution in the development of the nuclear device that was exploded in Pokharan in Rajasthan in 1974 by the Indian government.

Karnataka's Proposals on Resource Sharing

The Karnataka government on August 10 suggested to the Eighth Finance Commission a new formula for resources transfer, envisaging a greater share for the states and enlargement of the divisible pool.

Speaking at the commission's meeting with the state government, Chief Minister Ramakrishna Hegde said that the devolution formula being proposed would mark "a total departure" from the various concepts adopted so far.

Hegde's formula is based on two criteria of the composite index of development and the index of resources mobilization.

The chief minister also pleaded for the enlargement of the divisible pool, including sharing with the states 90% of the income tax and 60% of the corporation tax and excise duty.

Hegde said the methodology adopted by Karnataka for its formula on the composite index of development was the same as the one used by the United Nations for ranking developing countries. According to the new formula, 60% of the distributable pool of resources should be devolved on the basis of the distance of each state from the top state in the composite index of development.

signed a declaration formally launching an integrated program of action for South Asian Regional Cooperation to promote collective self-reliance and improve the quality of life of the people. The declaration notes that regional cooperation should be based on and in turn contribute to mutual trust, understanding and sympathetic appreciation of national aspirations of the countries of the region. The 8 objectives are to accelerate economic growth, promote active collaboration and mutual assistance in economic, social, cultural, technical and scientific fields, to strengthen cooperation among themselves in international forums and with other developing countries, to cooperate with international and regional organizations, etc.

The foreign ministers agreed to meet once a year to review the progress of SARC. They also decided to recommend to their governments a summit of heads of states or government.

Uranium to be Made in India

According to the Chair of the Atomic Energy Commission, Dr. Raja Ramanna, nuclear reactors would start using uranium derived from indigenous thorium next year. According to Dr. Ramanna, India had adequate thorium potential to produce the required quantity of uranium for an estimated 1000 MW of atomic power from reactors at different places.

CULTURE

Obscenity in One Tamil Film

RASHEEDA BHAGAT

AVM's latest release is *Munthanai Mudichu*, directed by K. Bhagiaraj, who has also played the lead role of a widower schoolmaster.

Apart from dialog with double meaning, which unfortunately is more the rule than the exception in an average Indian movie, the most objectionable aspect of the movie is that kids have been perversely used by the film-makers. A couple of kids with a precocious curiosity about a man-woman physical relationship, titillates one audience after another in packed theaters, the film having proved a runaway success wherever it has been released. And then, of course, how could the censors object to kids enacting what they have seen a man and a woman perform?

In the film, two young boys enact for the heroine what has supposedly transpired between the hero and the "other woman." The song sequence begins with blatantly lewd sounds, supposed to be a replay of a passionate scene between a man and a woman. The gestures which follow, the manner in which the children rub their bodies against each other, the gyrations and twists of the kid representing the woman are sickening. Having successfully debased our women in one movie after another through the proverbial vamp, we now stoop to making a child master the "art" of gyration. And then we debate why women are harassed!

When I saw the film, not only adults but kids and teenagers in the audience were titillated by the scene, which climaxed with the two kids throwing off their clothes to continue the sequence in their loin cloths.

Objecting to scenes like this, the Consumers Council of Tiruchi sent a letter to the Regional Censor Office in Madras, demanding that the film should be given an A certificate because it was not fit to be seen by children. It turned out that the film had been given an A certificate from the beginning and it had held this certificate without any cuts.

If this was the case then how did people in general and the Consumers Council in particular get the impression that the film had a U certificate? The answer is that advertisements - hoardings, posters and ads in the media - have either failed to inform the public or deliberately concealed this fact. Also the theaters have freely allowed children and those below 18 to see this film.

Four theaters in Madras are now screening this film. I saw children being freely allowed in for the show at a theater.

There is a heated debate on whether some dialog, especially mouthed by children, should have been allowed by the censors in the first place, even if the film was given an A certificate. It is learnt that the film was passed without a single cut after a "considerable debate." Allegations have been made that with both AVM and Bhagiaraj being big names, the movie escaped the censors' scissors, and that a smaller producer or director would not have had such smooth sailing with the censors.

Mahadevi Verma Wins Jnanpith Award

Hindi poet Mahadevi Verma was named for the Bharatiya Jnanpith Award for 1982. The committee cited Yama as Verma's outstanding work in announcing the 150,000 rupees award to the poet. Verma is 76 year old, she was born in Farukhabad, UP.

Kharij: A Film Review

Our Delhi Correspondent

Mrinal Sen's new film *Kharij* (The Case is Closed) received the special jury award at Cannes this year - the second Indian film to have won an award there after Satyajit Ray's *Pather Panchali*. *Kharij* is the story of a middle-class family in Calcutta whose seemingly ordinary life is thrown into turmoil by a domestic crisis. Through this the film-maker attempts to probe the whole complex of social, ethical and legal codes that govern middle class urban life in contemporary India.

Palan, a 10-year-old servant boy of a young working couple, dies of excessive inhalation of carbon monoxide. The first few minutes of the film deal with the circumstances in which the death takes place. The young boy, unable to sleep under the staircase without adequate bedclothes on a cold winter night, had quietly moved into the kitchen. The family habit of leaving a coal fire to burn out by itself as it provides a panful of hot water in the morning, and the landlord's negligence in not providing proper ventilation in the room are the main circumstantial factors in the boy's death. The rest of the action in the film is taken up by the various formalities relating to the incident - informing the boy's father and relatives, dealing with the police, claiming the body after the post-mortem, and the funeral. But the main focus throughout these external happenings remains fixed on the inner conflict of the protagonists, the young couple who had employed the boy. Their emotions of guilt and sorrow are relentlessly juxtaposed to the unnerving fear of reprisal and concern for loss of face. Much of the power of the film derives from Sen's skillful portrayal of the contradictions inherent in middle class values. His unhurried handling of detail and a general lack of overstatement contribute to the richness of the film.

Terror Apparent

PARESH DHAR

The terrific giant bucked and bounced violently.

With his bludgeon-like bulky legs he crushed to death anyone voicing the least dissidence.

That's why in the heart-strings of countrymen

clanged consternation big and blue. A question welled up within them: Is there none to defeat the demon?

It was a wonder of wonders indeed! Gradually and steadily came forward myriad smudgy humans ill-clad and hunger-mauled but tempered and militant who spilled their blood

in fields and factories and yet whose sinews were as strong as steel.

Intimately and warmly they clasped their hands with one another and started hounding the monster collectively with all their might.

Suddenly something fell down on the ground with a thud from the head of the monster.

The pursuers picked the thing up and saw, to their utter amazement, that it was a large and hideous paper mask!

The giant could be seen nowhere any longer.

JOSEPH MALIANKA

Bullets from the Daula Kuan firing range in the Cantonment area of Delhi continue to hit adjoining Inderpuri colony despite the army having "surveyed" and "reorganized" the range as recently as May.

Stray bullets from the range have been hitting the colony for the last 10 years injuring scores of people. Repeated complaints by residents and the local police to the commanding officer of the firing range have elicited the response that it is impossible for bullets to reach the colony.

Arjun Singh Buys off Dissidents

N.K. SINGH

It was a political masterstroke with all the hallmarks of an astute strategist. In a sudden and swift operation, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Arjun Singh has wiped out dissidence in the ruling party.

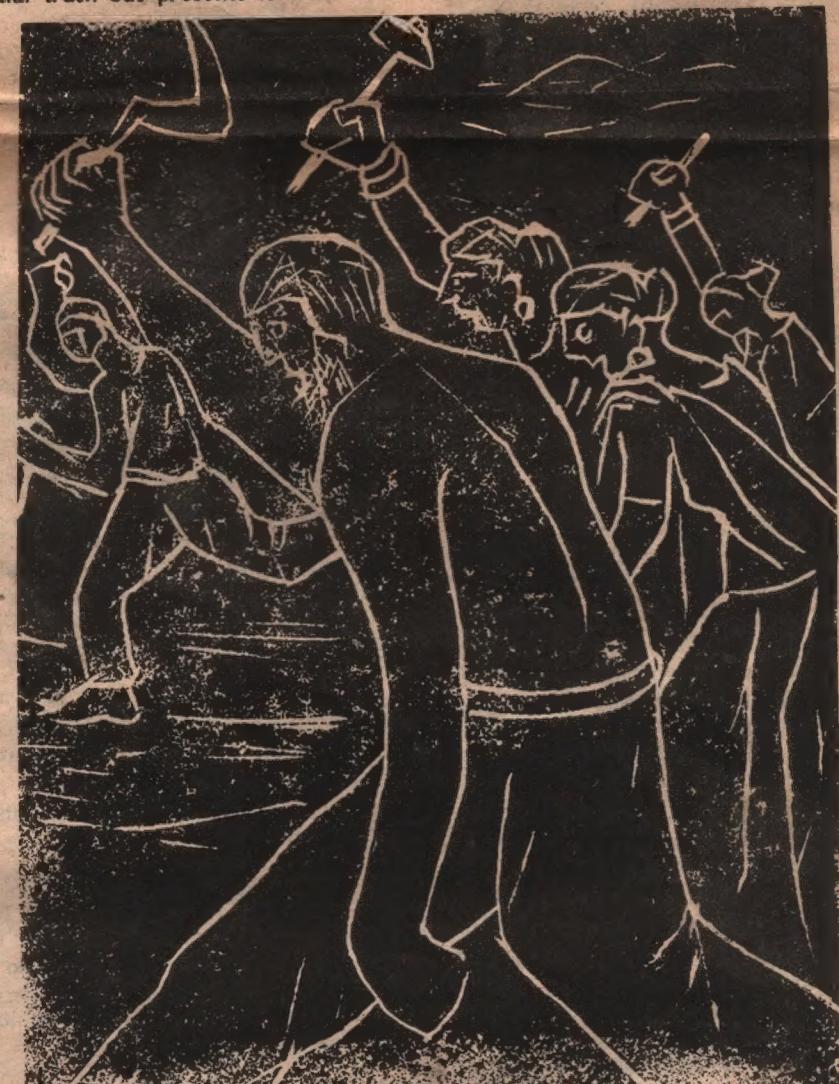
The decision to "accommodate" dissident MLAs in various public undertakings, which have emerged as mini-empires over the years, has virtually finished dissidence in the state.

Almost all the prominent dissident legislators belonging to the V.C.Shukla camp have been appointed heads of government corporations and given ministerial status. Every third Congress(I) MLA is now either a minister or enjoys the perks and status of a minister.

Arjun Singh's cabinet has 42 members besides three parliamentary secretaries. About 40 others have been given ministerial status, 29 of whom are Cong(I) MLAs and the others had lost in the Assembly elections. Those who could not be given this status were accommodated in various cooperative institutions and special area development authorities and given all the perks of a minister.

Each person with ministerial status gets a salary of Rs 1,500 a month, TADA, personal staff, furnished residence, free conveyance and medical facility. They are allowed to spend upto Rs 15,000 on furnishing their bungalows. If they cannot get government accommodation, they are allowed a monthly house rent of Rs 3,500. They get 200 liters of petrol every month for their cars.

Arjun Singh has been going around the state asking people to save the money they spend on garlands for politicians.



Army Unmoved by Stray Bullets Hitting Delhi Civilians

Police officials of the area told Express News Service that whenever a bullet injury was reported, they registered a case as a matter of routine. The bullet was sent to the Central Forensic Science Laboratory and the case forgotten, because the army refused to take note.

Meanwhile, Inderpuri residents, having failed to move the army, are resigned to the thought that the flying bullets are a "natural calamity" for which there is no remedy.

Jaswinder Kaur, 57, said: "Whenever we hear shots being fired at the range, we take it as an unavoidable calamity like

floods. We have ceased to think of it as an issue even though it is a living terror for us."

(from the Indian Express)



Punjab Bandh, Bhindranwale

Police and paramilitary forces fired tear gas and plastic bullets to control thousands of Sikh demonstrators who were demanding the closing of government offices in several main cities of Punjab on August 29. The demonstrators' action was a continuation of a 1-day strike called by Akali Dal to press for its demands. The main targets of the demonstrators were the offices of deputy commissioners in Amritsar, Ferozpur, Gurdaspur, and Ludhiana. The police arrested over 100 Akali workers and leaders before the strike. Meanwhile, the split between the extremist leader Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and Akali Dal President Harchand Singh Longowal seems to have widened after Bhindranwale went ahead with the meeting of the "cleanhearted" on Sept 4 against Longowal's wishes. Over 300 people attended the meeting in which Bhindranwale was reported to have said that no agreement short of the Anandpur Sahib resolution would be acceptable to the Sikhs. He also added that Sikhs would be satisfied only if they are recognized as a nation. In an apparent concession to the present Akali leadership, Bhindranwale said that the Sikhs should not criticize the present leadership publicly. At the same meeting, Jagdev Singh Talwandi, who had earlier been reprimanded for having called for a separate meeting of the Akali Dal, openly attacked Longowal and said that the leadership was taking the Morcha on a wrong path because of its wrong policies and mishandling. Talwandi denounced Longowal for announcing that only 3 demands were left to be met; Talwandi called this a betrayal to the Sikh Panth.

Earlier there were false reports that Bhindranwale had canceled the meeting because of pressure from Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee President Gurcharan Singh Tohra.

BJP Lok Dal Alliance

Lok Dal president Charan Singh has been chosen as the chairman of the coordination committee of the National Democratic Alliance formed by the Lok Dal and Bharatiya Janata party early August. Charan Singh later said that the alliance was not an "ad hoc or loose arrangement but is the considered outcome of prolonged discussions and deliberations spread over a period of about 5 months."

Jagjivan Ram, president of Jagjivan Congress, has criticized the alliance saying that it "reflects the fascination that Charan Singh has for BJP." Ram recalled that in 1979, Charan Singh had held a strong dislike for the BJP faction of the Janata party because of its connections with the RSS and this became responsible for the disintegration of the democratically formed Janata government. Following this, Charan Singh was the prime minister for a short while with the support of Indira Congress. About his own party, Jagjivan Ram said that he would not have any alliance with the BJP because of its communal and sectarian character as well as its connection with RSS.

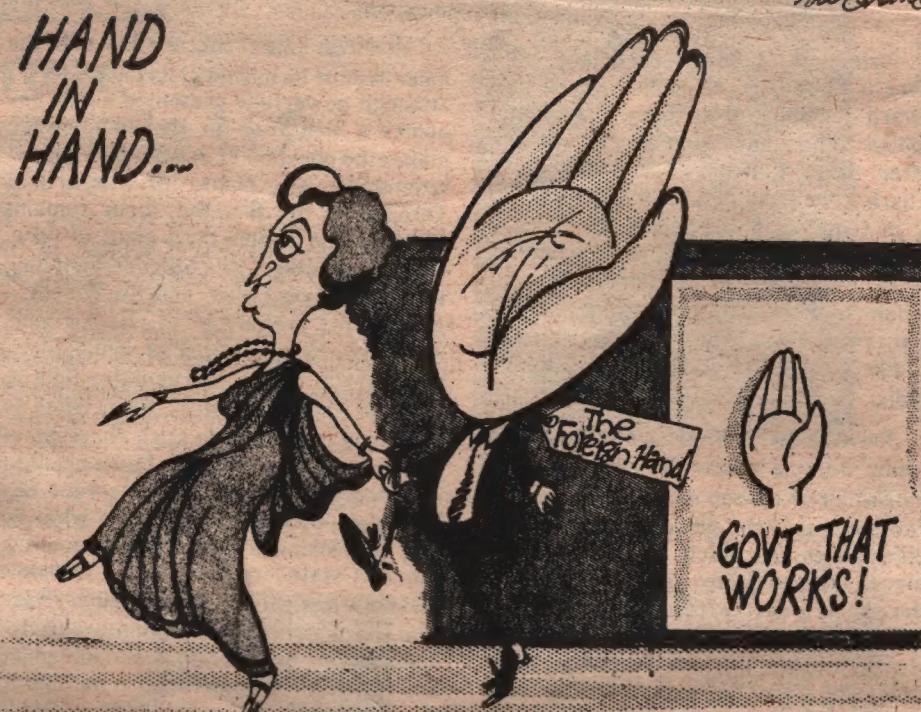
A "Fundraiser" for Mondale

(continued from page 5)

thousand dollars from this fund-raiser but he was given only three thousand. Sheraton Center, where the function was held, was given money to cover at least 125 persons but only 40 paid guests came. In short, the function was financially a great loss. I wonder what impression Mondale would have taken with him about the Indian Community with such a poor turn-out and only three thousand dollars for his campaign. He or for that matter any other politician will now shy away from attending the so-called Indian Fund Raisers. This function has definitely done more harm than good for the Indian community.

First, let us think whether the Indian community should get involved in this kind of fund-raising for politicians, when there are so many other things which other ethnic groups have accomplished successfully. People have been talking about an India Center for a long time but nothing has been done so far except talking. Many people are dying of hunger and

Gandhi on Superpowers



In an interview with the Times of India, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi criticized the United States policy in South Asia. Gandhi said, "Some of their policies are very different from our own and the way in which they envisage this area or their strategy in this area is not in our interest." She criticized American arms supplies for Pakistan.

Gandhi also said that the US lacked any appreciation of the problems of the developing countries. "They [the American government] do not see the problems and some of the solutions which they offer aggravate the problems in a developing economy."

Gandhi added that her government would not abandon friendship with Soviet Union. She however denied that her government was tilted towards any one of the superpowers. Gandhi also said that her personal relations with US president Reagan were very friendly but added that "relations between countries do not depend upon personal equations." Gandhi recalled that the Soviet Union with which her government signed a treaty in 1971 and which is a major arms supplier for India "has helped us out in times of need when other countries have not been willing to do so."

Indira Complains about Judicial Activism



In a recent interview with the Times of India, Indira Gandhi has charged the judiciary with "taking over what we consider are functions of the executive" in matters like official appointments.

Gandhi said she did not wish to interfere with the functioning of judiciary in any manner. "But I must say that the courts, and infact the entire legal community, should think about doing something to reform themselves."

Discussing the judiciary at length, the Prime Minister said the irritants today were that the most trivial of cases were admitted. "The case is just admitted; notice is given to the other side; lawyers are asked to argue it out. This takes time and we can do nothing."

On the other hand she pointed out that certain judges did not hesitate to set aside all procedures, sit up late in the night and pass a judgment on a particular issue or release somebody. In this connection she cited the example of a person who was arrested for murder in Allahabad and released on bail. Soon after he committed another murder, she said.

About official appointments or promotions, Gandhi said the government acted after a long judicious process of scrutiny by various committees going into seniority and other criteria. She asked: "How can the courts or anyone else outside know what is required for that particular post and which particular person is best suited for it?"

poverty in India but we do not raise funds for them. Even in the USA there are many Indians who need help in many areas but nothing has been done in that direction. Instead of doing those worthwhile projects, the community is now getting involved in these fund-raisers. These functions do only one thing - boost the egos of a few people, who get a chance to shake hands with a celebrity, get themselves photographed with the person, get it printed in a few Indian newspapers and magazines, and feel a great sense of accomplishment! May good sense and wisdom prevail on these men so that they do something productive and constructive for the community!!

Lal Parekh Flushing, N.Y.

Fence for Bangla Border

The Central government has decided to put a barbed wire on the entire 2500-mile border with Bangladesh to prevent illegal crossings. According to official sources, the fence will be put in stages with the most vulnerable places closed first.

Bangladesh's military ruler Lieut. General EM Ershad has called upon the Indian government to drop the idea of erecting a barbed wire barricade on the border. According to Ershad, such a move might jeopardize the good relations between the two countries. Ershad was quoted as saying, "Bangladesh wanted to live in peace and harmony respecting each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity." Ershad rejected recent allegations of Bangladeshi infiltrations into India as "completely untrue and without any basis whatsoever."

Later, Ershad called on the people of Bangladesh to oppose what he called an "attempt to encircle us by barbed wire." Ershad added, "A sovereign, independent nation will not accept barbed-wire fencing on its border."

In a related development, the Election Commission has recommended in its report of Feb, 1983 on the Assam election that the so-called foreigners in Assam be granted all rights except the right to vote or to hold political office. The report was held by the Indian government until August 2 when it was placed in Parliament at the opposition's insistence. On the elections held in February, which led to the death of over 3000 people, the report recalled that it had recommended to the government that the situation in the state was not ideal for holding the election. The report also added that whenever the election commission's officers met government officials in regards to the election, they suggested to the government to solve the decade-old problems first.

India Blocking Pakistan's Re-entry into Commonwealth

The Indian government is reportedly objecting to Pakistan's readmission to the Commonwealth. According to the Indian External Affairs Minister PV Narasimha Rao, since Pakistan voluntarily left the group it could not come back at will. Rao made these remarks in Parliament in response to a member's question if the Indian government was prepared to give up what he called the obstructionist attitude to Pakistan's reentry.

Pakistan pulled out of the Commonwealth in 1974 after it recognized Bangladesh. Pakistan has not applied formally for readmission but the Pakistani government in the past has expressed willingness to join the Commonwealth. The next Commonwealth meeting is scheduled in New Delhi in late November this year.

Maldives

Indian and Maldives government signed a cultural agreement aimed at developing bilateral cooperation in the fields of arts, cultural, archeology, education, media and health and social welfare services. The agreement was signed during the first official visit ever of the President of an Indian ocean archipelago since Maldives became independent in 1965.

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